

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 1

MARCH, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THIS is the 229th issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the twentieth volume. Every day new subscribers are being added to our list, and since we have an unusually large percentage of renewals our circulation now stands at its highest figure. We feel sure that no publication devoted to recordings approaches ours in the number of its paid subscribers. We wish to take this occasion to welcome the new readers who have joined us during the last year and to say a word of appreciation for the faithful support of the many old-timers, some of whom have been with us since Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1933).

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The interest in recordings of artists of another day, especially vocalists, is steadily growing throughout the country. Many persons are making collections of the records of such artists as: Battistini, Boninsegna, Caruso, Chaliapin, Clement, Galski, Galvany, McCormack, Melba, Patti, Plançon, Ruffo, Slezak, Tetrazzini, Zenatello *et al.*

During the first two decades of the present century HMV made many recordings of these great artists. Through the years their records gradually disappeared from the catalog and not many persons of the present generation know that they ever existed. However, collectors know of them and are ever on the lookout for them. With this small but insistent demand in mind HMV recently made a search of its vaults and selected a number of masters of recordings of especial artistic value. From these masters a group of records were pressed and were issued under the general title of "The Archive Series." All of the artists mentioned in the first paragraph, and many more, are represented in this unusual series. Caruso heads the list with fifty-six selections, followed by McCormack with twelve, Battistini with ten

and the other artists with varying lesser numbers.

The first shipment of these remarkable records recently arrived from England and are now available. We would like to have reviewed these records but did not because, in the first place, they would very likely appeal only to a small percentage of our readers, and as space is already at a premium we did not feel that it was fair to take any space for them that might be used for considering new releases. In the second place, there are so many of them that it would have been months before we could have covered all of them, listing a few each month.

We do know that some of our readers are interested and so we have prepared a printed list, and anyone desiring this list may have one if he will simply send us a postal card requesting a copy of "The Archives Series" circular. We might also mention for the benefit of our readers who are collectors of records of historic interest that we maintain a special department for such recordings. It is known as the "Collector's Corner" and thousands of discs that are no longer generally available are to be found in this unique department. Inquiries from any of our readers about such records will receive prompt and careful attention. If the item is not presently in stock, a record of the inquiry will be made and the reader will be notified if, and when, it becomes available.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove rec-

ords have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA

Prokofiev: Scythian Suite, Op. 20. One side, and **Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije Suite, Op. 60.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Herman Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5091) \$5.95.

Of the two points we wish to make about this disc, one can be made without much chance of argument from any side, and that is the excellence of the reproduction. This disc rates with the highest of the high fidelity jobs and does it with the blessing of everyone—including some of us who like high fidelity reasonably sweet in string tone. This disc has everything you have ever dreamed of in good reproduction.

The second point is open to argument, as usual, for it deals with interpretation and performance. Scherchen is known on discs chiefly for his readings of the old masters, especially Haydn; but he has a local reputation for conducting modern composers, and this is now being committed to discs. The excellent Vienna Symphony does his bidding well, and the result is a telling account of these two Prokofiev scores, a choice LP coupling. Scherchen's account of the Scythians is a bit more refined than that bunch of barbarians deserves, and Ormandy has seen to it that more of the barbarism of that race has been transferred into musical noise and din in his recording of the work. Scherchen's competition for the *Lieutenant Kije Suite* is the talented Roger Désormière, who leads the French National Symphony in a bit more unbending and humorous account of the music. Considering the justness and accuracy of the readings, the Scherchen disc is probably the buy for most folks, for the superb reproduction is alone a deciding factor. Those who wish to compare existing versions will find subtle differences which add up to a whole product that is noticeably different in hue. Everything considered we would recommend this disc highly; the effects produced in the Wedding of Kije section alone are worth the price! That is a prize example of percussion recording. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 1 in C minor. Austria State Symphony conducted by Dr. Volkmar Andreae. 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-40) \$6.45.

Volkmar Andreae has dedicated his life to furthering the music of Anton Bruckner. Born in Bern, Switzerland, in 1879, he was permanent conductor of the Zurich Tonhalle Symphony from 1906-1949, and during that time introduced at least one Bruckner symphony every year. By 1911 he had performed all of them and from then on regularly conducted all nine Bruckner symphonies in each three year period.

Three times he led all of them in a single season. Some he has conducted more than forty times. Wherever he appears as guest conductor—in Italy, France, Great Britain, Austria, Sweden, etc.—he considers the presentation of at least one Bruckner symphony his most cherished duty.

We give this background of Dr. Andreae to impress on our readers that if any Bruckner recording ever bore the stamp of authority, certainly this one is it. At this point, it would be well to state that Dr. Andreae does not sentimentalize the music. He does not perform the music with mist in his eyes, and drool over every bar, which is what one might expect from a devoted disciple of Bruckner. Dr. Andreae is evidently a fine musician, and a sincere one, whose musical values are not distorted in any way. He performs this music with nobility of line and great strength, not overly vigorous, but with the starch that this score has in it. Hearing this recording strengthens our conviction that the Klemperer recording of the *Fourth Symphony* (*VX-PL-6930), which we praised so highly recently, is indeed a truly great interpretation too. Klemperer played Bruckner with more energy than is usually the case. Therefore it seems that many of the vaporous readings of Bruckner which we have heard are something synthetic; Bruckner's symphonies need a conductor who really understands them. In this recording of the *First* we have what must be a definitive reading, and in addition to that we have a really fine musical experience. If you have any interest in Bruckner, this disc bears our highest recommendation. The Austrian State Symphony is a competent group, and the reproduction accorded them is of the very best. Masterseal records are housed in an attractive padded leatherette folder, with an extra fly-leaf of program notes—three pages in all complete with musical themes. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60.

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7210) \$5.95.

Recorded at a concert performance in 1945, this recording is the fifth one to enter the LP catalogs. There is at times a shade too much echo in this recording, and certain loud passages tend to blur; in the softer parts the effect is lovely. Furtwängler is as individual in his reading of the *Fourth* as he was in the much discussed recording he made some years ago of the *Fifth*. There are parts which emerge in a new and more beautiful light than ever before, some sections which take on new life, and a few which you may feel are being wrung too hard. The second movement demonstrates Furtwängler's enormous control over dynamics and his ability to get the finest of shadings—he is probably unequalled in this by any other conductor. There is also a nice gradual build-up from the first movement through to the end of the symphony. This is worked out superbly so that it neither detracts nor adds where

it should not; it is mainly achieved by not pulling out all the stops in the first movement and by not tearing through the finale too fast (it is marked *Allegro ma non troppo*).

We like to think it is possible to detect some of the atmosphere present at an actual concert compared to the dry businesslike conditions at a recording session. There is undeniably present the reason for which concerts are given—people—and the resultant forces of inspiration, keenness, a little tension, the effort to do it right and best the first time, the feeling of communicating something directly to the audience, all these things leave an imprint on the music played. Can you hear it in this recording?

Our preference for the *Fourth* is somewhat biased in favor of this one, but we doubt whether anyone would deny any of the others are better listening except possibly the Beecham version. S.

Tchaikovsky: Souvenir de Florence. String Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5083) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 1 in D minor, Op. 43. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1121) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 2 in C, Op. 53. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1122) \$5.95.

At last we have come to something new in Tchaikovsky—three works new to discs, and all three of them fine material. How these pieces have suffered neglect is unexplainable, for they have enormous appeal. The *Souvenir de Florence* is really a string sextet, and while the scoring is in no way alien to its original chamber ensemble, it does allow for intensification of its coloration by the use of a small string orchestra, which is employed in the present recording. It was written "in memory of days of inspiration spent at Florence." In four movements, each of symphonic length, there is as much Russian character as Italian in it. The finale is the most Italian in feeling, and it is a sprightly thing that cannot miss fire even on first hearing. Swoboda and the Vienna Opera Strings play the work superbly, and are accorded some of Westminster's top-notch reproduction.

When we mention that both of the suites were composed after the first four symphonies, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Francesca da Rimini*, it will be understood that these are no early trifles. They have, in fact, an infinite variety of moods, and are rich in fluid melodic style, just as much, if not even more, than any of Tchaikovsky's other works. The first suite has six movements: *Introduzione e fuga*, *Divertimento*, *Intermezzo*, *Marche Miniature*, *Scherzo*, and *Gavotte*. The second suite is somewhat more programmatic than the first and is less formal. It has five movements: *Jeu de Sons*, *Valse*, *Scherzo-Burlesque*, *Rêves d'Enfant*, and *Danse Baroque*. This

music is rather akin to his ballet suites, and is quite charming every minute of the way. The second suite easily belongs alongside the composer's most inspired achievements. The fine Winterthur Symphony is conducted with distinction by Walter Goehr, who gives superlative performances of these works. Concert Hall has obliged with just about the best reproduction we have ever heard from them. These are two real "finds" for anyone interested in more Tchaikovsky, and with the Westminster disc, comprise a trio of discs that are truly worthy additions to the LP lists. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-487) \$5.95.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 4 in G, Op. 88. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-488) \$5.95.

When you hear George Szell conduct the first dozen bars or so of the Brahms *Third* you have the essence of the whole performance, for the die is cast and Szell's stamp is evident throughout the work. It is a reading that is precise and exacting, rather tense and cold drawn. It does complete justice to the letter of the score, and it summons forth some magnificent playing from the orchestra. Of the other LP recordings, Koussevitzky and Ormandy have readings of merit. Koussevitzky offers a more spacious and overstuffed version, while Ormandy remains in a somewhat smaller frame, but manages to crowd a maximum of lush orchestral playing into it. We like Brahms somewhat more resilient than Szell presents it, but his drive and precision are so admirable that we have to admit this reading is a classic. London's reproduction adds a lot to the score too. If you take your Brahms seriously, you will take the trouble to sample the three mentioned; otherwise we suggest that you will not be in any way disappointed with the new Szell disc.

With the Dvorák *Fourth Symphony* we have a more difficult choice, for the only other LP disc of this work is by Bruno Walter (*C-ML-4119), and his recording of it is a beauty. Walter achieves a maximum blend of warmth and virtuoso playing in his recording which is thrilling to hear. Szell is more calculated and obtains greater clarity, without sacrificing too much of the over-all picture. We find it hard to give up the Walter recording and name it as a preference to our readers. The Szell disc has a sharper reproduction. In this, as in the Brahms above, the Concertgebouw Orchestra plays splendidly.

The Dvorák symphonies—those other than the popular "New World"—all contain so much lovely music that their popularity is practically guaranteed to those who hear them but once. You seldom hear them in the concert hall, but you can make up for that loss with records. In addition to several fine recordings of the *Fifth*, we now have two of the *Fourth*, and one each of the *First*, *Second*, and *E-flat*,

Op. 66, the last named a particularly tuneful gem. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1614) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1194) \$5.72.

Last November in TNR we reviewed a Schumann *Second* on Mercury, conducted by Eugen Papst, with the Munich Philharmonic (*ME-MG-10082). We were most enthusiastic about that particular performance of the *Second* and bestowed lavish praise on it. Now we have another recording by Stokowski and the decision is at once difficult as to whose Schumann *Second* is preferable. Papst is more relaxed all through the work, much more continental in approach. His Schumann is not weak or watery, it has reasonable strength and supremely beautiful lines and phrasing. Stokowski has given the work a much tighter and less resilient reading. It carries great weight of conviction, and does not seem mannered or erratic; it is thoroughly convincing. There are moments of soaring beauty in Stokowski's interpretation, notably in the third movement, *Adagio espressivo*. Even the reproduction of these two versions is complementary to the conductor's view. Papst's disc has a rather deep perspective, while Stokowski's is closer and more revealing—typical of the reproduction Victor achieves with this orchestra. There is room for both versions, so excellent is each in its way. The choice will rest with the purchaser, depending on which he considers better Schumann.

The orchestra, which has been created for recordings conducted by Leopold Stokowski, again shows itself to be one of the country's top flight organizations. This hand-picked group (which we lightly refer to as "His Symphony Orchestra") is always a joy to hear, and the technique used in recording them results in unusually fine orchestral discs. We still think their recording of the Sibelius *First* one of the most enjoyable discs available. Contrary to some opinions, Stokowski has not come close to having passed the height of his powers; his current series of recordings attest eloquently to that. S.

Debussy: Images pour Orchestre, Set III. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 5-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1618) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1197) \$5.72.

Images is rarely heard in concert complete, with all three sections being played. Usually we hear *Iberia*, occasionally *Gigues* and *Rondes de Printemps*, but it remains for the phonograph to bring us the complete set. *Iberia* is a full-scale symphonic piece in three movements; it is flanked by two short pieces each in a single movement. *Gigues* has the folk idiom of English music, *Rondes* is based on a French folk tune, *Iberia* is of course, very Spanish. The three make a clever panorama of the three nationalities of folk music as only Debussy could distill it—so clear, yet atmospheric—so sophisticated, yet not

superficial. *Images* is a tasty dish for symphonic music lovers, and they will gain by having all three sections available for a straight-through playing.

Monteux is the Gallic conductor supreme of our country, and his reading of *Images* is a typical Monteux performance. There is an honest vitality that becomes this music, a vitality sometimes missing from performances of such music. The coloring is always clear, however quiet or subtle. *Iberia* is notably well set forth by Monteux. A previous LP release (*L-LLP-44) of the three *Images* has the distinguished conductor Ernest Ansermet, who is even more delicate in parts than Monteux. Ansermet has a bit rounder reproduction; Monteux has very revealing and rather bold reproduction, which enhances the clarity but comes close to hurting the subtleties. The choice between these two excellent performances is not easy, but we believe most persons would prefer the Monteux disc and recommend it as the better all around choice. S.

Ippolitov-Ivanov: Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10.

One side, and Tchaikovsky: *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66—Suite. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-440) \$5.95.

This LP disc contains two examples of London frrr recording at its best. If you have a high fidelity phonograph and you would like to show it off, here is the record for that purpose. The selections are so well known that they need no comment; all that is necessary is to state that they have been given brilliant performances under the direction of the very able Roger Désormière.

Haydn: Notturmo No. 4 in F (Partita in F). EMS

Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler.

One side, and Haydn: *Sonata No. 43 in A-flat* and Haydn: *Sonata No. 51 in D*. Charles Rosen (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-LP-3) \$5.95.

The present disc contains some lovely Haydn music that has not appeared on LP discs previously. The Partita is nicely played by a group of players from the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the able direction of Edvard Fendler. Mr. Fendler will be remembered for the many fine recordings he has made for French HMV and other European labels. The two Sonatas are beautifully performed by the American pianist, Charles Rosen, a pupil of Moriz Rosenthal, Hedwig Kanner-Rosenthal and Robert Casadesu.

A Vienna Philharmonic "New Year" Concert.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-484) \$5.95.

Music of Johann Strauss (Vol. II). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-454) \$5.95.

The first LP disc listed above contains selections by the brothers Strauss (Josef and Johann). On New Year's day each year the Vienna Philharmonic Or-

chestra under the direction of Clemens Krauss gives a concert of Strauss music. The pieces to be played at the concert in 1952 were selected by London and recorded by that company in October 1951. The present LP disc is the result. The selections are: *Mein Lebenslauf ist Lieb und Lust; Die Libelle; Jokey; Im Krappfenwaldl; Eljen a Magyar; Tales from the Vienna Woods; Pizzicato Polka; Agyptischer Marsch; and Vergnügungszug.*

On the second disc will be found two popular Strauss overtures and two waltzes. The overtures are those of *Die Fledermaus* and *Der Zigeunerbaron*. The waltzes are: *Künstlerleben* and *Frühlingsstimmen*.

Clemens Krauss is noted throughout the world for his playing of Strauss; when he has the famous Vienna Philharmonic under his baton, music lovers may be assured that this gay music is played to perfection.

Rossini: L'Inganno Felice—Overture; and **Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani**—Overture. One side, and **Cherubini: Anacreon**—Overture. Austria State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui. 1-10" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-41) \$5.45.

Gluck: Iphigenia in Aulis—Overture; and **Beethoven: Zur Namensfeier, Op. 115**—Overture. One side, and **Weber: Oberon**—Overture; and **Mendelssohn: Märchen von der schönen Melusine**—Overture. Austria State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui. 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-42) \$6.45.

There is seemingly always a demand for recordings of overtures and thus these two LP discs should enjoy a wide sale. This should be particularly true when they are recorded under the direction of such a brilliant conductor as Vittorio Gui. Maestro Gui was born in Rome in 1885 and is a graduate of the Academy of Santa Cecilia. He is well-known as an operatic and symphonic conductor in Italy, and he has appeared with success at the Salzburg Festival and as guest conductor of the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras. He founded the Florence Symphony Orchestra and is its chief conductor. These LP discs will give many American music lovers an opportunity to make his acquaintance.

Waltzing with Waldteufel. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1522) \$3.99. Coupled with **Strauss Polkas.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1226) \$5.72.

Strauss Polkas. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1520) \$3.99. Coupled with **Waltzing with Waldteufel.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1226) \$5.72.

The Boston Pops Orchestra is right at home with such pieces as will be found on the present LP disc and, as one would expect, this great organization makes the most of its opportunity. The lively selections are brilliantly played and recorded with rare fidelity.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 58. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-417) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 15. Friedrich Gulda (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-421) \$5.95.

In the January issue of TNR we reviewed a double-header of the Beethoven First and Fourth Concertos, and now we have another pair of them. We went so far in praise of the Novães-Klemperer rendition of the Fourth that our position this month is precarious even before hearing the new one by Backhaus. This veteran pianist and respected Beethoven interpreter does indeed offer a great reading with uncommonly fine backing by Clemens Krauss and good London reproduction. Crowding the picture is a first-rate version by Artur Rubinstein with Beecham conducting on a Victor Treasury Series reissue; Casadesu and Ormandy have a fourth LP to complete the list. This is a tight spot for the reviewer, and we will back out gracefully with a preference still for the Novães-Klemperer disc (*VX-PL-7090) by a slight margin—including the opening part of the last movement, handled better than Backhaus. If you want to hear a couple for yourself, we can say that it will be time well spent, for the music is of the greatest, and Novães, Backhaus, and Rubinstein are each worth hearing in it.

The *First Concerto* again has the stylish playing of the Vienna Philharmonic this time under Böhm, a man well suited to the graceful designs of the *First*. Friedrich Gulda is a pianist of great talent who keeps the whole picture of the *First* within an appropriate framework that is not too big and brassy. We imagine a lot of folks will find this even too tame a performance. In that case, the Giesecking recording on Columbia will fill the bill perfectly, for he has a bit more to say in this piece. The Mercury disc at \$4.85, as mentioned in the previous review, is a real bargain with its coupling of a Haydn piano concerto on the same disc, and the performance of the Beethoven *First Concerto* by Heinz Schröter is the equal of Friedrich Gulda in our opinion. For a crisp and neat performance of the *First* there is also the Dorfmann-Toscanini recording which many claim to be the best. Our recommendations are still Giesecking (*C-ML-4307) or Schröter (*ME-MG-10047). S.

Chopin: Concerto No. 2 in F minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21. Guiomar Novães (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7100) \$5.95.

The previous concertos recorded by Guiomar

Novães, Beethoven *Fourth* and the Schumann, have been to us the best available. And we will now add the Chopin *Second* to the list, for it is preferable to Ballon, Malcuzyński, and even Rubinstein in various degrees. This woman is truly one of the greatest keyboard artists of our day and she is in congenial material with this concerto. The second movement, *Larghetto*, is played with the utmost beauty and poetry that never varies from good taste and control. As in previous concerto recordings Mme. Novães has the Vienna Symphony under Klemperer, and that rock of strength provides a fine accompaniment. Klemperer's enthusiasm and obvious desire to rectify some of the shortcomings of the Chopin orchestral score lead to a few moments which are almost too big for the piece. But these instances are rare and do not detract from an otherwise fine accompaniment, in which Klemperer is alert every minute.

When we are appraising some of the hair-raising moderns of our day it is well to recall the receptions given Beethoven, Brahms, and others for works which are now considered classics and without novelty. It is always difficult, in retrospect, to visualize the impact of a composer of genius upon his generation. Today Chopin is a "safe" master, regarded as sentimental in certain quarters. In his day he was considered a revolutionary, a man of radical ideas, a dangerous influence and an undisciplined force. The *F minor Concerto* was composed before the *No. 1 in E minor*, and while it is immature Chopin, it is also novel and brilliant for a man of nineteen. The harmonic language and richness and resource in modulation can match most of his later works. Its structure is orthodox and the orchestration is very weak, but the emphasis is on the piano part which was for its day, monumental, and is today mighty impressive. S.

Handel: (6) Organ Concertos, Op. 4. Walter Kraft (organ) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7130) \$11.90.

Handel wrote three sets of Organ Concertos, the second of which consisted largely of arrangements of the *Concerti Grossi*. The best known works are the 12 concertos that make up Op. 4 and 7; Op. 4 is sub-titled "for Organ or Harpsichord" and one of these works, No. 6, has been recorded in the harpsichord version. The scores of Handel's Organ Concertos are sketches or outlines which the soloist developed and elaborated upon in actual performance. Hence they are usually played today in arrangements, and often in versions for organ solo. The best known solo versions are those by Best.

Of all the Handel concertos for organ, the one that has always appealed most to us, is the No. 5 of Op. 4. It is receiving its first recording in this complete album. The final *Presto* movement is the sort of thing you cannot forget, and it is fun to play. We found it played at a slower than usual tempo in this performance, but the tempo chosen

has much merit, and we are inclined to think Kraft had a good idea about the tempo of this movement.

To have all six of Op. 4 recorded at one time by the same group is something unusual, and could hardly be expected except under the present flowering of LP releases. The Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra of Stuttgart conducted by Rolf Reinhardt, with Helma Elsner, harpsichord, provide enthusiastic support for the organist, Walter Kraft, a man of sterling taste and technique. They perform all this music with a style that is delightful. It is music-making that all lovers of music of that period may well enjoy. We recommend it highly from all aspects, including good reproduction. S.

Schumann: Concerto in D minor, Op. 134. Peter Rybar (violin) with the Lausanne Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Desarzens. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1128) \$5.95.

The *Concerto in D minor for Violin and Orchestra*, the last of three concertos from the pen of Robert Schumann, was his last composition on a large scale. The *Concerto*, though written under dismal circumstances, contains some of his finest and most beautiful musical ideas, but has been sadly neglected. This may stem from the fact that it presents enormous technical difficulties, for the composer did not take into consideration the capacities of the performer. The *Concerto* remained buried for some eighty-odd years. It was only first published in 1937, and is now known to many music lovers through the pioneer efforts of the violinists Yelley d'Aranyi, grandniece of Joseph Joachim, and Yehudi Menuhin.

A couple of recordings were made of this concerto some years ago, including one by its champion, Yehudi Menuhin. The present one is the first available on LP, and is the finest work we have heard from Peter Rybar. We were greatly impressed with his work in this concerto, more so than in any of his previous recordings. He has an obvious feeling for the music and conveys his understanding to the listener in this communicative reading. His playing of the middle movement contains much fine shading and is very effective. We completely enjoyed this performance, including the accompaniment, sympathetically directed by Victor Desarzens and well played by the Lausanne Orchestra. Desarzens is permanent conductor of the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra. Anyone interested in violin concertos will do well to investigate this disc. S.

Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25. Frank Pelleg (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. One and one-half sides, and **Mendelssohn: Variations Serieuses in D minor, Op. 54.** Frank Pelleg (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1127) \$5.95.

The G minor piano concerto of Mendelssohn is a splendid example of his style—romantic music with a goodly amount of personal emotion expressed, but

* indicates LP 88 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
♩ indicates 45 rpm.

always within the bounds of good taste. It is well written for the piano, and grateful for the pianist to play for everything comes off well, and there are no awkward passages. Its virtuosity is held down reasonably well, with a brilliant finale capping the piece nicely. This work was played year in and year out since its inception until about thirty years ago. It is once again becoming popular, and we think it deserves to be heard a little oftener. Mendelssohn's gift for melody was extraordinary; he ranks with the greatest of the melodists, as this work strongly testifies. The Concerto is in the usual three movements: Allegro, Andante, and Presto. It receives as fine a performance here as it has ever had on records (this is the first LP of it), for Pelleg is a performer of surprising virtuosity and interpretive power. He has fine collaboration from Goehr and the Winterthur Orchestra, and good reproduction.

The Variations Serieuses is one of Mendelssohn's finest piano compositions. The use of the word "serieuses" in the title was meant undoubtedly as a protest against the triviality of most of the variations which appeared following the death of Beethoven, Weber and Schubert. The piece consists of a theme and seventeen variations which are full of change and offer a wide range of contrast. It, too, is played with considerable skill by Frank Pelleg, a brilliant Israeli pianist who is establishing a firm reputation as one of the most important keyboard artists in Europe today. This is a very worthy disc which can be recommended for its material as well as its execution and reproduction, S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Howe: Suite for String Quartet and Piano. The Chamber Arts Quartet: Werner Lywen, George Steiner (violins); Norman Lamb (viola); John Martin (violoncello); with Emerson Meyers (piano). One side, and **Howe: Interlude between Two Pieces.** Wallace Mann (flute) and Emerson Meyers (piano). And **Howe: (3) Pieces after Emily Dickinson for String Quartet.** The Chamber Arts Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-9) \$5.95.

This splendidly recorded LP disc will very likely bring to the attention of music lovers everywhere an American composer of distinction—one who deserves greater recognition than she has so far received. Mary Howe was born in Richmond, Va., in 1882. She studied piano with Richard Burmeister in Europe and with Ernest Hutcheson and Harold Randolph in this country. Her teacher of composition was Gustav Strube. Mrs. Howe is a graduate of Peabody Conservatory (Baltimore) and made her debut as a pianist in Washington, D. C. in 1915. Thereafter she concertized widely as soloist and also in two-piano recitals with Anne Hull. Since 1924 Mrs. Howe has been a successful composer of orchestral, chamber and vocal music.

The three works on the present LP disc are fine examples of Mrs. Howe's work in the field of chamber music. The space available does not permit our considering them in detail but those interested will find excellent notes on each by Dr. William B. Ober on the back of the record envelope. The artists who have made these recordings are all of high calibre. They are members of The Chamber Arts Society of The Catholic University of America, and all of them are associated with the National Symphony Orchestra. Emerson Meyers is the musical director of the Society. WCFM has supplied reproduction of high fidelity.

All in all this is a record that we do not hesitate to recommend to all those who are interested in measuring the development of musical culture here in our own country.

Mozart: Quartet No. 14 in G, K. 387. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 15 in G minor, K. 421.** Roth String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10108) \$4.85.

Mozart: Quartet No. 16 in E-flat, K. 428. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 17 in B-flat, K. 458 ("Hunting").** Roth String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10109) \$4.85.

Mozart: Quartet No. 18 in A, K. 464. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 19 in C, K. 465 ("Dissonant").** Roth String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10110) \$4.85.

All the above Quartets (6) available as a set. 3-12" discs in album (*ME-MGL-8) \$14.55.

It is indeed a great joy to welcome the Roth Quartet back to the field of recorded music after an absence of about ten years. We remember the many outstanding recordings that this famous Quartet made during the late twenties, the thirties, and the early forties. Welcome gentlemen! We hope that you will find your way to the recording studio often.

The choice of the six quartets that Mozart dedicated to Haydn is indeed a very happy one for the occasion of the return to records of this great chamber music group. Each is a delightful work, and to have them all played by the Roth's is something that we feel sure chamber music lovers will welcome sincerely. Mercury has supplied especially fine reproduction. Nothing but praise for these outstanding recordings!

Kreutzer: Grand Septet in E-flat, Op. 62. Members of the Vienna Octet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-420) \$5.95.

Konradin Kreutzer (1780-1849), a composer of some thirty operas and numerous other works, was one of the best of the minor German operatic composers. He is not to be confused with the violinist, Rodolphe Kreutzer, to whom Beethoven dedicated his famous "Kreutzer Sonata." Although contemporaries, they were not related.

The present chamber work by Konradin Kreutzer is a pleasing work to listen to—but of no importance

musically. Great quantities of such music was heard in the salons of the aristocracy throughout Middle Europe in the first half of the 19th century. To our way of thinking the fine performance of The Vienna Octet is superior to the music that it is playing.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 8 in F, K. 213 and Mozart: Divertimento No. 13 in F, K. 253. One side, and **Mozart: Divertimento No. 14 in B-flat, K. 270 and Mozart: Divertimento No. 12 in E-flat, K. 252.** Karl Mayerhofer, Bruno Doerschmidt (oboes); Gottfried von Freiburg, Leopold Kainz (horns); Karl Oehlberger, Rudolph Hanzl (bassoons). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5103) \$5.95.

We have noted that recently there is a growing interest in chamber works employing only wind instruments, thus we feel that the present LP disc will reach a wider audience than one might usually expect. These little works are in no way profound. They were probably written to order for the enjoyment of the guests of persons of quality at certain social functions. They were likely very pleasing to the audiences for which they were composed, and we can enjoy them too if we are in a suitable frame of mind.

The Heart of the String Quartet. Paganini Quartet. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1611) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1192) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Quartet in F, Op. 3, No. 5*—Second movement (Haydn); *Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421*—Third movement (Mozart); *Quartet No. 5 in A, Op. 18, No. 5*—Third movement (Beethoven); *Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Op. 125, No. 1*—Fourth movement (Schubert); *Quartet No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 12*—Second movement (Mendelssohn); *Quartet No. 1 in A minor, Op. 41, No. 1*—Second movement (Schumann); *Quartet No. 1 in D minor, Op. 11*—Second movement (Tchaikovsky); *Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96* ("American")—Second movement (Dvorák).

Unquestionably this disc is intended primarily as propaganda for chamber music generally and the string quartet particularly. As we listen to it, we would say that a fine job has been done. Hardly anyone who listens to these beautiful and melodious complete movements from these outstanding quartets can help having the urge to listen to more such chamber music. The Paganini Quartet has supplied superb performances and RCA Victor has provided reproduction of rare excellence.

CHORAL



Carissimi: Jonas. (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Angelicum Chorus and Orchestra (Milan) conducted by E. Gerelli. One side, and **Vivaldi: Stabat Mater.** (Sung in Latin). Maria Amadini (contralto) with the Angelicum Orchestra (Milan) conducted by E. Gerelli. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7180) \$5.95.

Of the two items presented on this record, the

first recording of Carissimi's *Jonas* is, beyond a doubt, one of the most outstanding releases to date. Musically it is of paramount interest and exceptional beauty. Carissimi's music exercised considerable influence on Handel both formally (Carissimi has been termed, by those with a passion for such nomenclature, the "father" of the oratorio) and esthetically (Handel was wont to help himself rather liberally on occasion to Carissimi's tunes).

Jonas abounds in flowing, majestic melodies and in rich, varied chordal combinations. There is a spiritual calm, an almost Olympian detachment here that one encounters only in the greatest music. The soloists, including the redoubtable Giovanni Malipiero, are uniformly excellent and sing with care and rare sense of style.

After the Carissimi opus, Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* comes as a startling experience, not so much because it is lesser music, but because of the considerable textual differences and the treatment they receive. The Vivaldi work is scored for solo voice and chamber orchestra. It is a difficult piece, one that taxes the soloist's—in this case Maria Amadini—ability to color a phrase. Mme. Amadini does exceptionally well and her voice, an ample mezzo-soprano, is equal to all the demands she places on it.

Mo. Gerelli directs the Angelicum (Milan) orchestra in both recordings, while the chorus in the Carissimi selection was prepared by A. Bortone. A sense of propriety and an obvious love of the music characterize their collective efforts. The recording is very good and informative notes are supplied.

W.

Verdi: Missa da Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Selma Kaye (soprano); Myriam Pirazzini (mezzo-soprano); Gino Sinimberghi (tenor); Augusto Beuf (basso); with Rome Opera House Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Luigi Ricci. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-213) \$11.90.

Verdi: Missa da Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Lois Hunt (soprano); Janice Moudry (mezzo-soprano); Paul Knowles (tenor); Kenneth Smith (basso); with the Calvary Church (New York) Choir conducted by J. H. Ossewaarde (organ). 2-12" discs in folder (*CH-CHS-1131) \$11.90.

Verdi's great *Manzoni Requiem*, untouched by record companies (LP that is) for four years, suddenly appears in two new versions, and in a dubbed pressing (soon to be released) in Victor's Treasury series. The standard for years has been the Victor recording made in Italy circa 1938 with Caniglia, Stignani, Gigli and Pinza with Tullio Serafin at the helm. Now there are two new recordings, one domestic, the other made in Rome—and both leave much to be desired from an artistic standpoint.

The Urania set, made on native soil, is surprisingly undramatic. To be sure, there are many who deplore the "operatic" quality of this great *Requiem* and Sgr. Ricci must be one of them for he soft-pedals most of the theatrical effects in the score by adopting a

slow tempo and avoiding dynamic contrasts. Such is his feeling, and one takes it or leaves it; certainly the free-thinking Verdi ("I walked to church with Arrivabene this morning and, as usual, left him at the door and returned home.") was not writing a mass for the Church, but one for Manzoni and, consequently, for all time. As always, his idiom was extremely personal.

Vocal honors, in this set, go to Augusto Beuf, who sings beautifully with great sonority and effect. Selma Kaye and Myriam Pirazzini are in fine voice and sing, within the limits imposed by Ricci, with feeling and taste. Gino Sinimberghi is not a good tenor and the great and moving *Ingemisco, tanquam reus* is marred by excessive vibrato and poor tone, largely due to his inability to sing the music easily.

The Concert Hall set is also a disappointment. The orchestra has been replaced by an organ. This is difficult to understand. Either a work should be performed as written, or let alone. At today's prices for records, economies (if such were the case) are definitely not in order. The soloists, while they sing all the notes with reasonable accuracy, are not of recording calibre, as judged even by today's relatively low standards, let alone the standards of the late Twenties and early Thirties.

Thus neither set is what could be called satisfactory. Those who have the old Victor 78's had better stick with them or wait for the re-issue under the "Treasury" label. Those who must have the *Requiem* in a modern recording are advised to hear the Urania set with special attention to Sinimberghi.

W.

Honegger: Le Roi David (complete). (Sung in French). Janine Micheau (soprano); Janine Collard (contralto); Pierre Mollet (tenor); Jean Hervé (speaker); Maurice Durufle (organ); with the Elisabeth Brasseur Chorus and the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française directed by Arthur Honegger. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-204) \$12.50.

King David, a Symphonic Psalm in Three Parts, thus reads the title page of Arthur Honegger's setting of a series of psalms after the drama by René Morax. It was early in 1921 that the commission was received and between February 25th and April 23rd of that year the score was completed. Honegger rearranged the work subsequently, scoring it for large orchestra and organ; the part of the Narrator was added also with the idea of holding the composition together for concert performance. In a charming essay explaining the origins of the work, M. Honegger writes that *King David* is the work of a beginner but that it is also written with complete spontaneity. He is too modest in the first statement and absolutely correct in the second.

King David is certainly one of the most remarkable of modern compositions. There is a seriousness, a high purpose that sets it apart from the usual modern (that is, post World War I) effusions. The

form of the work is similar to Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ*, being in fact, almost an oratorio. There are solo passages, choruses and, as in the Berlioz work, a Narrator. The music is written with feeling for the text and there are some very impressive moments, such as the *Song of Festivity*, the *Dance before the Ark* and the wonderful *Alleluia* chorus that closes the second part.

The performance, as directed by the composer, must be considered definitive and Honegger is fortunate in having a group of high calibre soloists. Janine Micheau is one of France's foremost sopranos, Janine Collard is a fine contralto and Pierre Mullet a first-rate tenor. The Elisabeth Brasseur Chorus has been well trained and sings with accuracy and tonal beauty. L'Orchestra National de la Radiodiffusion Française plays with enthusiasm, obviously trying to give the composer its full support and cooperation.

Westminster has furnished a recording job that has few peers. The complete French-English text is supplied in addition to analytical notes and Honegger's aforementioned essay. The issue has everything to recommend it and all music lovers are urged to investigate.

W.



OPERA

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg—Act I (complete). (Sung in German). Hilde Gueden (soprano); Gunther Treptow, Anton Dermota (tenors); Alfred Poell (baritone); Paul Schoeffler (basso); supporting soloists with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-478/9) \$11.90.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg—Act III (complete). (Sung in German). Hilde Gueden (soprano); Gunther Treptow, Anton Dermota (tenors); Alfred Poell (baritone); Paul Schoeffler (basso); supporting soloists with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLP-480/1/2) \$17.85.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (complete). (Sung in German). Hilde Gueden (soprano); Gunther Treptow, Anton Dermota (tenors); Alfred Poell (baritone); Paul Schoeffler (basso); supporting soloists with the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 6-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-9) \$35.70.

London, with the release of Acts I and III of *Die Meistersinger*, fulfills the promise made a year ago when Act II was issued (TNR Feb. '51). The complete opera is now available with a superb cast and in magnificent recording!

The cast is just about as fine as could be imagined. Hilde Gueden, as Eva, is youthful and sprightly in

addition to being a very accomplished singer. Else Schurhoff is a convincing Magdalene; her warm mezzo-soprano and sense of comedy are both of the first calibre. Walther von Stolzing is impeccably sung by Gunther Treptow. He has a manly tenor, free from the usual Teutonic mannerisms as to voice production. His performance lacks, one is glad to note, the asinine pompousness with which the role is usually invested. As David and Viet Pogner there are two more first class singing actors in the persons of Anton Dermota and Otto Edelmann. Both turn in performances that rate high both artistically and vocally. Paul Schoeffler, as Sachs, is ideally cast. He can be dignified without being stuffy; in short, he is human and convincing. Vocally his wholly admirable basso is an unalloyed pleasure, especially in the wonderful monologue *Wahn, Wahn, überall Wahn!* at the beginning of Act III. Among the others it is necessary to single out Karl Donch as an exceptionally able Beckmesser.

Hans Knappertsbusch paces the performance in ideal fashion and the great Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra second his efforts like the traditionally fine musical organizations they are. The entire project is what one expects on records, but so seldom gets in these days of mass production and the mad rush to record anything and everything.

This performance and recording completely overshadows the two other issues, those of Urania (TNR Nov. '51) and Columbia (TNR Jan. '52). A complete German-English libretto is included. W.

Puccini: La Tosca (complete). (Sung in Italian). Simone Dall'Argine (soprano); Nino Scattolini (tenor); Scipio Colombo (baritone); Alfred Poell (basso); with supporting soloists, the Vienna Kammerchor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Argeo Quadri. 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-302) \$18.78.

Westminster, this month, enters the field of operatic recording with a stunning technical job, but a something less than satisfactory performance artistically of Puccini's thriller, *La Tosca*. Westminster is one of the finest record companies in the business, but its artistic direction seems to be instrumentally and orchestrally inclined (or rather, its *forte* is in other than the vocal field) at least to date. There is more to opera than a group of good voices.

To be specific, the principals of this recording, Simona Dall'Argine (Floria Tosca), Nino Scattolini (Cavaradossi) and Scipio Colombo (Baron Scarpia) are all excellent singers, but only Colombo is able to impart a semblance of realism to his performance. The others, particularly Scattolini (the role is admittedly difficult) sing accurately and with considerable beauty of tone but with little or no imagination. The same criticism applies to Argeo Quadri's pacing and direction of the opera.

The smaller roles, however, are in good, even excellent hands; the characterizations of Angelotti

(Alfred Poell) and Il Sagristano (Karl Donch) are far above average. The Vienna State Opera Orchestra and the Vienna Kammerchor play and sing like the superb organizations they are.

Overshadowing the actual performance, however, is the magnificent recording. The opening trombone passage is one of the most realistic things this reviewer has ever heard on records. And the same high level of excellence is maintained throughout the set. The album includes a libretto, fine pictures and informative notes. W.

Humperdinck: Hänsel und Gretel (complete). (Sung in German). Erna Berger, Margarete Arndt Ober (sopranos); Elisabeth Waldenau, Marie Luise Schilp (mezzo-sopranos); Hans Heinz Nissen (baritone); with supporting soloists, Berlin Mozart Boys Choir and the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-212) \$11.90.

This, the second complete *Hänsel und Gretel* on LP is, in some ways, an improvement over the earlier Metropolitan production issued several years ago by Columbia. The differences, as might be expected, lie largely in the approach to the music and the presence of the incomparable Erna Berger in the cast. Then, too, the performance is in German and somehow or other, the use of the original language is more fitting—the opera has a better "sound." Owners of the Columbia set, however, need not worry too much, for it also has its merits.

Miss Berger and Miss Schilp as the two children are extraordinarily convincing. Their voices complement each other and they enter into the spirit of the affair in a manner that displays both their familiarity with and love of the score. Hans Heinz Nissen, as the Father, is a fine singing actor. His voice may sound a bit light for the role to some but, here again, the sheer artistry of the man more than makes up for any vocal deficiencies. Margarete Ober is a seasoned singer and her portrayal of the Witch is at once effective and musical. The lesser parts are also in very capable hands.

The Berlin Civic Opera Company, under Arthur Rother, provide strong support. Herr Rother directs the performance with energy and spirit. Urania's recording is neither good nor bad. The highs are inclined toward shrillness but this can be minimized on most modern phonographs. A German-English libretto and excellent notes by Peter Hugh Reed complete the offering. W.

Purcell: Dido and Aeneas. (Sung in English). Eleanor Houston, Adele Leigh (sopranos); Evelyn Cuthill (mezzo-soprano); John McCarthy (tenor); Henry Cummings (baritone); supporting soloists with the Stuart Chamber Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Jackson Gregory. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-546) \$5.95.

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* has been recorded, in its entirety, three times, but this is the first LP

* Indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ rpm.
g Indicates 45 rpm.

version. The first complete recording appeared around 1935 under the English Decca label and was a superb performance, if not technically outstanding. A later recording, on HMV, issued about in 1946 featured Joan Hammond and Isobel Baillie and a group of other top-flight English singers, but was somehow disappointing. Now, in a new "version" prepared from various manuscripts by the conductor Jackson Gregory, there is the spanking new performance.

The soloists are, with one exception, uniformly good. The role of Dido has been given to the young Australian soprano Eleanor Houston who sang the role in the 1951 Festival of Britain. Miss Houston has a very lovely voice of large compass and she sings with intelligence and purity of tone. Insofar as the libretto permits, she sings with considerable expression and feeling. Adele Leigh, as Blinda, is an excellent foil, having, as she does, a light clear soprano and her singing is distinguished by its musicianly and stylistic qualities. Henry Cummings, the Aeneas of the performance, is a somewhat pompous Trojan and does not have, unfortunately, the robust baritone one wishes for the part. He is over-refined in his characterization but within these limits sings acceptably. It is in all events, virtually impossible to make the role convincing due to the poor libretto.

The Stuart Chamber Orchestra and Chorus under Jackson Gregory do a fine job, the chorus especially singing with fine understanding. The orchestra is small (which it should be) and the *continuo* is played on a harpsichord dating from about 1710. It was made, incidentally, by Hitchcock, whose father built Purcell's harpsichords. This link with the composer lends an added air of authenticity to the performance.

The recording is excellent and the complete text has been included. W.

Offenbach: Orphée aux Enfers (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists with the Paris Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Rene Leibowitz. 2-12" discs in album (*RENAISSANCE SX-204) \$11.90.

One of the greatest treats this writer can ever remember on records was offered by the present issue of Offenbach's delightful *Orphée aux Enfers*. The overture, a notorious war-horse from the old silent movie days, has long been familiar; to find that the opera itself is every whit as amusing is a thrill that comes once in a lifetime.

The librettists, Hector Cremieux and Ludovic Halevy have done a sterling job of spoofing the old legend of Orpheus and Eurydice. In their version, Orpheus is a violin teacher whose wife Eurydice can not stand him or his music! Pluto, in the guise of a shepherd, abducts Eurydice and the rest of the work concerns itself with a running battle between Pluto and Jupiter for possession of the heroine. The music is glorious and the tunes are so appropriate, so convincing, that the shrewdness of Rossini's remark "Of-

fenbach is the Mozart of the Champs-Elysées" becomes at once apparent. Offenbach's score abounds in his own particular brand of impudent and ingratiating melody and, as Paul Láng points out, the "... small finely wrought forms, lilting or slightly lascivious dances ... remarkable declamation ... and brilliant, piquant yet supple orchestration have not lost one iota of their freshness."

All this scholarly fooling is presented by a fine cast of French singers who perform the work to the hilt. Claudine Collart is an entrancing Eurydice; Jean Mollien, a properly stuffy Orpheus. As Pluto, André Dran turns in a thoroughly delightful portrayal, while as Jupiter, Bernard Demigny manages to be at once dignified and ridiculous—no mean feat! Smaller roles, such as L'Opinion Publique (the librettist's substitute for the Greek Chorus) and John Styx (a former King of Beotia) are perfectly sung by Violette Journeaux and Jean Hoffmann, the latter being wonderfully effective as the drunken and dim-witted ex-king. The spoken dialogue has been included; and this is well, for it is essential to the full enjoyment of the work. René Liebowitz's direction is notable for its many musicianly qualities and the light touch so necessary in *opera-bouffe*. The overture has not been included, probably because of lack of space but since there is a thrilling LP version of this superb music on London (*L-LLP-350) the omission is not serious.

The set is obviously highly recommended; everyone from lovers of Victor Herbert to the Bach and Palestrina enthusiasts are urged to hear it and add it to their collections. It is one of the most enjoyable operas ever written, funny without being vulgar, free without being unrestrained. Don't miss it! W.

Smetana: The Bartered Bride (complete). (Sung in German). Traute Richter (soprano); Ralph Peters, Sebastian Hauser (tenors); Robert Koffmane (baritone); Wilhelm Lang, Kurt Böhme (bassos); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin Civic Opera. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-210) \$18.50.

The *Bartered Bride*, one of the operatic staples in Europe but not heard at the Metropolitan for over ten years, is presented this month in an authentic performance by the Berlin Civic Opera Company via Urania Records. There is quite a bit to be said for such "on the spot" performances; they have a flavor, a degree of realism that is very often lacking in our domestic productions. On the other hand, the artists occasionally are not of first rank and the recording is quite frequently "spotty."

The present set offers the favorable features almost exclusively and must be accounted a success. The star of the show is the inimitable Kurt Böhme. He romps through the role of Kezal in splendid style, making the most of the humor and singing with authority and good taste. Seconding his efforts both histrionically and vocally is the delightful lyric so-

prano, Traute Richter, as Marie. Sebastian Hauser is a better than average Hans. He and Mme. Richter team up in one of the opera's highlights, the duet *Mit der Mutter*. Since this reviewer is one of those persons who does not think stuttering is the least bit funny, perhaps the aversion he felt towards Ralph Peters delineation of Wenzel was an unconscious tribute to that gentleman's artistry.

The minor roles are well cast, such artists as Wilhelm Lang (Mischa), Emmy Hagemann (Agnes) and Robert Koffmane (Kruschina) being very capable. The Berlin Civic Opera Orchestra and Chorus are excellent groups and they play and sing with style and enthusiasm. Hans Lenzer's direction is well paced and carefully considered.

The recording is good without being in any way exceptional. A libretto is supplied but it abounds in typographical errors. A little more care in this department would not be amiss. W.

VOCAL



Grieg Songs. Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite and Walter Süsskind. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1533) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-99) \$4.67.

Records by Kirsten Flagstad are always welcome, particularly when she turns to the songs of her native Norway, as in this present issue. Here her artistry and innate sense of style are apparent in every note she sings. Then, too, in these songs Mme. Flagstad seems to acquire a warmth of expression, a humanity that often seems submerged in her operatic ventures.

There are six songs on this 10" disc. First is *Guten* (The Youth) one of the twelve Opus 33 songs written in 1880. This song is followed by the better known *Fra Monte Pincio* (From Mount Pincio). It is interesting to note the effect of southern climes and sunshine on Scandinavian composers. Nearly all have written music in or about Italy. This song is a magnificent evocation of a sunset over Rome. Two more of the Opus 33 songs, *Ved Ronterne* (The Wounded Heart) and *Varen* (Springtime) follow. Both are very beautiful and might be more familiar to music lovers as the *Two Elegiac Melodies*, Op. 34, for string orchestra. Grieg arranged them and *Ved Ronterne* became *Hjertesor* (Heartwounds) and *Varen* became *The Last Spring*. The record closes with *Eros* and the familiar *En Svane* (A Swan).

All of the vocal opulence one expects from Kirsten Flagstad is very much in evidence on this record and, as pointed out above, her singing of this music is a revelation. It makes of Grieg an important composer while she sings, but he becomes perceptibly smaller when she has finished.

Expert orchestral accompaniments are provided by

the Philharmonia Orchestra under Süsskind and Braithwaite. The recording is remarkably fine and notes, giving the English texts, are supplied. The record is one that belongs in every library but will be sought after, especially, by the lovers of fine singing. W.

Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) with the Robert Shaw Chorale of Men's Voices directed by Robert Shaw and the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1532) \$2.83. Coupled with **Mahler: Kindertotenlieder.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1146) \$5.72.

Mahler: Kindertotenlieder. (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted Pierre Monteux. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1531) \$3.99. Coupled with **Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1146) \$5.72.

Marian Anderson's recording of the *Alto Rhapsody*, made some years ago with Monteux and the San Francisco Orchestra, was never entirely satisfactory primarily for technical reasons. This fault has now been corrected with a vengeance in this new release of the same music but with a different orchestra and sparkling recording. The *Rhapsody* was written in 1869 after Brahms had read Goethe's romantic and somewhat extravagant *Harzreise im Winter* on top of an unhappy love affair. He selected the three middle stanzas and set them to some of his finest music. It is gloomy poetry, and the music is correspondingly sombre in color and feeling. Miss Anderson is a happy choice to record the work, for her voice, with its wide range of expression, complements the work in superb fashion. The Shaw Chorale of Men's Voices with the RCA-Victor Orchestra provide support that is everything it should be and a little more.

The other side is devoted to what will be generally considered the finest recording of Gustav Mahler's strangely morbid *Kindertotenlieder*. Mahler was a man, as the annotator of this disc aptly puts it "with a singular capacity for unhappiness, real or imagined." The genesis of these songs is well known, and it only remains to observe that Miss Anderson is here too the ideal interpreter of the music because of her extraordinary gifts. Previous recordings by Lorri Lail and Kathleen Ferrier (TNR Sep. '51) are put quite in the shade by this new performance. Pierre Monteux and the San Francisco Orchestra provide expert accompaniments.

The recording in both instances is magnificent, the balance between singer and orchestra in the Brahms work is especially fine. Intelligent notes have been supplied and, although the texts have been omitted, there is a discussion of each item that conveys the meaning of both words and music. W.

Torroba: Luisa Fernanda. (Sung in Spanish). Solos with chorus and orchestra conducted by Gonzalo Roig. 1-12" disc (*CE-70002) \$5.95.

The form or term *zarzuela* will, in all probability be new to most North American music lovers. It is defined, then, as "a form of the Spanish lyrical theatre in which song is intermingled with spoken dialogue." Its name is derived from the so-called *Fiestas de Zarzuela* which, in the 17th century, were written by various dramatists of great renown in collaboration with some musicians of relative obscurity. It is a sort of operetta or Spanish *opera-comique*. There are several types, the present work being a *zarzuela grande* because of the subject matter's seriousness and pathos. Torroba is known primarily for his guitar music, popularized by the great Segovia. He has also written orchestral pieces in addition to a large amount of vocal works including an opera *La Virgen de Mayo*. The *zarzuela* "Luisa Fernanda" dates from 1932 and was first produced in March of that year at Madrid.

This recording, made in Cuba, has an authentic air about it. The singers, with one exception, are more than equal to the occasion. The title role is sung by a young lyric soprano, Marthe Pérez; the hero, Javier Moreno, by Francisco Naya, a light tenor reminiscent of Schipa but without the great tenor's artistry. The role of Vidal, the rich farmer, is sung by Gil Mar who has the oddest baritone this reviewer has heard in some time. It is a very throaty, almost hoarse voice and it also has a "gritty" quality that is far from musical. The wealthy widow Carolina, a mezzo, is effectively sung by Maruja Gonzalez.

Musically the score strikes one as being light weight. Most of the songs and concerted numbers are in dance rhythm and melodically undistinguished. The work is definitely national, rather than international in character. It will be of interest only to those who have inclinations toward Spanish music. A libretto is supplied but no English translation has been included—lending support to the supposition that the recording is primarily for the Spanish and South American markets.

W.

A Purcell-Dowland Recital. John Langstaff (baritone) accompanied by David Soyer (violin) and Herman Chessid (harp). 1-12" disc (*RENAISSANCE X-27) \$5.95.

Purcell's vocal music, which is receiving considerable attention from the smaller record companies these days (and not always happily, unfortunately) offers a rich field for exploration. There are 39 "operas" and each offers a veritable treasure trove for the singer. These songs are also full of pit-falls for the unwary—they are not as easy and simple as they seem. The same observations hold true, although to a somewhat lesser extent, to the music of John Dowland.

The Purcell songs here recorded are six in number and include *Music for a while*; *I'll sail upon the*

Dog-Star; *The Knotting Song*; *Strike the viol*; *Evening Hymn*; and *In cassum, Lesbia*; the last, perhaps, better known as *The Queen's Epitaph*. Musically they are all one could expect. Purcell's uncanny ability to set the English language to his warm, passionate melodies is a source of joy and constant amazement.

The nine Dowland songs, many of which will be new to most listeners, include *If Floods of Tears*; *Toss not my Soul*; *Woeful Heart with Grief Appeased*; and the more familiar *Fine Knacks for Ladies* and *I Saw My Lady Weep*. The music is very characteristic of the times as are the texts. They reflect the sad state of England after Queen Elisabeth's death and there is also an undercurrent of anxiety, something like that of today, caused by rapid changes, scientific and otherwise, that were transpiring with disconcerting rapidity.

John Langstaff is a fine artist with better than average musical intelligence. This ability, very necessary for this type of singer, is in addition to a really excellent baritone that he uses wisely and well. The accompaniments, as supplied by Herman Chessid and David Soyer lend an archaic and natural air that is very suitable.

W.

Strauss: Wiener Blut ("Viennese Blood") (complete). (Sung in German). Traute Richter, Irma Beilke, Rita Streich (sopranos); Sebastian Hauser (tenor); Leopold Clam (baritone); Fritz Hoppe (basso); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin Civic Opera conducted by Hans Lenzer. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-209) \$11.90.

Weiner Blut is an oddity among operettas. In the first place it is not Strauss—that is, Strauss did not put the work in the form in which it is presented. The work is a composite of tunes he wrote on many occasions, polkas, quadrilles, waltzes and the like. The plot, which is placed during the period of the Congress of Vienna, is the usual mixture of mistaken identities, complications and a final clearing-up. Strauss agreed to this *pastiche* but died before he could complete the job. It fell to his friend Adolf Müller to finish the task, which he did, in time to see the work fail miserably at its *première* in October 1899. Three years later, however, the work had a great success and has become well established in the intervening years.

A competent cast of singers, including Irma Beilke (Franziska), Traute Richter (Gabriele), Rita Streich (Pepi), Fritz Hoppe (Prince Ypsheim) and Sebastian Hauser (Balduin) give a rousing performance. Vocally all the singers are extremely able and they invest Strauss' nostalgic music with charm and sweetness. Spirited direction is supplied by Hans Lenzer and superb recording is furnished by Urania's technicians.

Musically this is very light-weight fare but none the less enjoyable. Old friends such as the *Artist's Life Waltz* and the *Emperor Waltz* put in an ap-

pearance and the other melodies are always good, if not inspired, Strauss.

For some obscure reason (not so obscure, perhaps, for it would have cost money) Urania supplies no libretto. Those whose German is something less than Hanovarian will have difficulty in following a detailed and complicated plot, not even a synopsis of which is given. W.

Ravel: Chansons Madécasses and Ravel: Chants Populaires. One side, and **Ravel: Histoires Naturelles and Ravel: Deux Epigrammes.** (Sung in French). Martial Singher (baritone) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano), Samuel Baron (flute), David Soyer (violincello). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1124) \$5.95.

This Concert Hall disc of Ravel songs presents the French Master at his Gallic best. Most typical is the set of *Histoires Naturelles*—delightfully witty settings of some of Jules Renard's poems. The French have a penchant for depicting animals in music and, even more, are fond of drawing morals from animal behavior. Thus these settings of *Le Paon* (The Peacock); *Le Grillon* (The Cricket); *Le Cygne* (The Swan); *Le Martin-Pêcheur* (The Kingfisher); and *La Pintade* (The Guinea-hen) are polished, witty and epigrammatic gems. Next is a set of *Deux Epigrammes* that are somewhat gnomic and obscure. More pretentious and meaty are the *Chansons Madécasses*, the first of which is a love song while the second is fraught with political significance—having had its inspiration in some trouble the French had in the colony—and expresses Ravel's opinions on the tyranny of the white race. The record closes with four *Chants Populaires* sung in Hebrew, French, Italian, and Spanish.

The disc is of paramount interest musically; it is also a great tribute to the artistry of the soloist, Martial Singher. It would indeed be difficult to imagine more tasteful, more expressive renditions. Vocally, his voice is the same warm baritone—colorful and sensuous. His very characteristic French clarity and sanity is apparent in every bar he sings. Paul Ulanowsky provides distinguished accompaniments. Mention must also be made of David Soyer's and Samuel Baron's fine work in the *Chansons Madécasses*.

The recording is perfect. Piano tone, relation of singer and accompanist, the general atmosphere prevailing in the studio are worthy of the highest praise. The only blemish involved in this release is the omission of an English translation of the texts of the songs. W.

A Schubert Recital. Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) accompanied by Sebastian Peschko (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-106) \$5.95.

Heinrich Schlusnus is considered by many to be one of the finest *lieder* singers before the public today. The present disc, devoted to Schubert songs is, for this reviewer, a distinct disappointment.

Herr Schlusnus seems tired, or even bored with his material. There is no real spirit, no attempt to re-create the mood captured by the "most poetic musician." *Der Musensohn* is a case in point. Goethe's little poem is set to lively, spirited music, but the soloist runs through it in a stodgy, almost apathetic manner. This criticism also applies to his performance of *Die Post* where the excitement and hope expressed in the music are negated by slow tempi and dull singing.

Vocally, Schlusnus still has an amazing amount of voice, considering he has been singing since 1915, or over thirty-five years. What is hard to understand, however, is that he should have lost interest, apparently, in the very field in which he established his reputation.

The record, very poorly recorded by London ffr standards, includes, in addition to the songs mentioned above, *Ständchen*; *Der Atlas*; *Das Fischer-mädchen*; *Sei mir gegrüsst*; *Die Stadt*; *Frühlingstraum*; *Gute Nacht*; *Der Lindenbaum* and *Wohin?* Sebastian Peschko, the accompanist, seems to have been afflicted by the low spirits of the occasion, for his supporting work is also routine. W.

Stephen Foster in Song and Story. Robert Merrill (baritone) with Clifton Fadiman (narrator) and the RCA Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Ted Dale. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1566) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-109) \$4.67.

This series of Foster songs, each touchingly introduced by Clifton Fadiman, would make an ideal radio program—one that thousands of listeners would remember with fond affection. However, we question whether, having it on a record, one would wish to hear it more than a few times. It is the sort of disc that one would play for his friends who have not heard it but not a record that one would play for himself very often. The selections, all of which are beautifully sung by Robert Merrill, nicely supported by a fine mixed chorus, are the popular Foster ballads including such favorites as: *Old Folks at Home*; *Old Black Joe*; *My Old Kentucky Home*; and *Beautiful Dreamer*.

VIOLIN



Handel: Sonata No. 13 in D. Four sides, and **Handel: Sonata No. 14 in A.** Two sides, and **Handel: Sonata No. 15 in E.** Three sides, and **Handel: Suite No. 6—Gavotte.** Mischa Elman (violin) and Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1590) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1183) \$5.72.

These are not great chamber works but they are pleasing to listen to and give the violinist ample opportunity to display his ability. Mr. Elman takes this opportunity in grand style. While we thoroughly understand that Handel rather slighted the piano parts, we do feel that the RCA Victor engineers might have given Mr. Rosé a better chance of being

heard by arranging a proper balance between the two instruments.

PIANO



Franck: Variations Symphoniques. Alexander Brailowsky (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1572) \$2.83. Coupled with **Liszt: Todtentanz** ("Dance of Death"). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1195) \$5.72.

Liszt: Todtentanz ("Dance of Death"). Alexander Brailowsky (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1615) \$2.83. Coupled with **Franck: Variations Symphoniques**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1195) \$5.72.

Franck: Variations Symphoniques. Géza Anda (piano) with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. One side, and **Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a.** Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9542) \$5.85.

Franck's *Symphonic Variations*, one of his true masterpieces, as played in these two recordings, offer another interesting study in different interpretations. These two products are as different (wish we could say un-alike) as any two peas in any two pods could be. Géza Anda on Decca is, in fact, a fresh tender, sweet garden pea; Brailowsky on the Victor disc is more like an old, hard turnip. Anda indulges in some delicate shadings and imaginative subtleties; Brailowsky, for the most part, plows through the music with an approach we would consider more appropriate to the "Emperor" Concerto. Victor wins a point with better reproduction, offering very fine piano tone and good balance. Decca's version has more artistry in the performance. Brailowsky has a more congenial vehicle in the *Todtentanz*, whose eerie, blatant, and generally animated moods find a better outlet in his percussive playing. Reiner is in there with him whipping things up. We have never cared much for this piece, and cannot get enthusiastic or serious about it, whoever the performer may be.

The Decca coupling to Franck is another variations form, although quite a different type. In this recording we have a young conductor, just now forty, conducting a performance of unusual mellowness, richness and warmth. Easy-going and deliberate tempi, expansive but never overblown—this is the good German style so becoming to music of this type. Leitner shows clearly his training under Karl Muck. It is not the dapper treatment of Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra players (*C-ML-2066), nor is it the jewel-cut brilliance of the Tos-

canini (*V-LCT-1023). It is a beautifully fashioned and valid reading in its own right, delicate and sympathetic and containing many enjoyable qualities. We have always admired the Toscanini recording of yesteryear. To choose between Toscanini and Leitner is not easy, for here are two different performances, both of which are superlatively good. The Decca disc does not boast the best of today's reproduction, being rather shallow in brilliance, possibly even monitored in volume. But its very plushiness rather enhances the conductor's style, and there is a fine resonance in the hall (however, no echo smear).
S.

Bach: Goldberg Variations. Rosalyn Tureck (piano). 2-12" discs in folder (*AL-ALG-3033) \$11.90.

This is the seventh LP recording in Miss Tureck's series which will encompass all of the works in Bach's *Clavierübung*. The present recording of the famous Goldberg Variations is monumental in scope; Miss Tureck has recorded this great work in full observing all of the "repeats." Here is a recording that students and lovers of the immortal Bach will certainly cherish.

Mozart: Sonata No. 17 in D, K. 576 ("Trumpet"). William Schatzkamer (piano). 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1650) \$2.83.

Scriabin: Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp, Op. 30. William Schatzkamer (piano). Coupled with **Mozart: Sonata No. 17 in D, K. 576** ("Trumpet"). 1-10" disc (*V-LM-156) \$4.67.

Here is another splendid little record by William Schatzkamer. Those who are interested in this fine artist will very likely be highly pleased with his performances of these sonatas—two little works that clearly show Mr. Schatzkamer's versatility—Mozart in an equestrian mood and Scriabin, as usual, dwelling in the ethereal.

Haydn: Sonata No. 43 in A-flat and Haydn: Sonata No. 51 in D. Charles Rosen (piano). One side, and **Haydn: Notturmo No. 4 in F** (Partita in F). EMS Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 1-12" disc (*EMS-LP-3) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Clavier ("The Well-Tempered Clavier") (Book II). (Preludes and Fugues Nos. 1 to 8). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 6-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1552) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1152) \$5.72.

Wanda Landowska continues with her project of recording the famous "Forty-eight." The first twen-

ty-four have been available on three LP discs for some time and with the present record the first thirty-two may be had. Critics have so universally praised Mme. Landowska's previous discs in this series that it is only necessary to state that the record released this month it well up to the standard that this superb artist has set for herself. It is reported that the final two discs will be made available during this present year.

DICTION



Robert Frost Reading His Own Poems. Robert Frost (reader). 6-10" unbreakable 78 rpm discs in album \$13.20. 2-10" 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm discs \$7.70.

The distinguished American poet, Robert Frost, winner of the Pulitzer prize on several occasions, has recorded twenty-four of his poems. The selections are the same on both the 78 and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm discs. As Mr. Frost has friends and admirers wherever English is read, it would seem that these records have a limited but wide-spread market awaiting them.

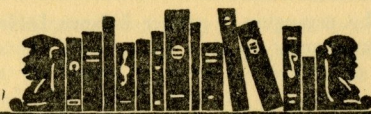
The selections are: *Birches; Reluctance; The Wood Pile; The Runaway; The Road Not Taken; A Peck of Gold; Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening; The Death of the Hired Man; The Onset; Mending Wall; Neither out Far nor in Deep; Two Tramps in Mud Time; Tree at My Window; Desert Places; One Step Backward; Fire and Ice; Dust of Snow; The Pasture; Mowing; After Apple Picking; The White-Tailed Hornet; A Tuft of Flowers; The Peaceful Shepherd; and Nothing Gold Can Stay.*

MISCELLANEOUS



This is Paris. Maurice Chevalier, Edith Piaf, Edward G. Robinson, Josephine Baker, Claude Dauphin and others. 1-12" disc in folder (*VX-PL-7170) \$5.95.

Space is not available for even a partial description of this unique recording. Briefly it may well be called a grand souvenir of the 2,000th anniversary of the first city of France. It was written and produced by Pierre Crenesse and Gerald Kean and contains a great variety of things Parisian: A Paris policeman; A newsboy; The French National Orchestra; The Trumpets of the Republican Guard; The Great Organ of Notre-Dame; Les Petits Chanteurs à la Croix de Bois; Henri Salvador, Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier each singing a typical French song; and more and more and more scenes in about the great city. If Paris has nostalgic memories for you, you will unquestionably find this disc of keen interest. If not, perhaps you had better hear it before buying it.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PLM—Polymusic, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 2

APRIL, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THE LATEST editions of the "Music America Loves Best" and "Request" catalogs have just been issued by RCA Victor, and these should now be available at your dealer's.

Readers will recall that the "MALB" catalog contains listings of records of wide and continued appeal and which should be stocked by most record dealers, while the "Request" catalog contains listings that are of interest mostly to the connoisseur of fine music and not generally stocked. "Request" items will be available to special order only and will take from two to four months for fulfillment.

If your local dealer cannot supply them, both of the above catalogs are now available from the publishers of this bulletin. The "Music America Loves Best" catalog (352 pp.) is 15c. The "Request" catalog (128 pp.) is 20c. Both prices are postpaid in U. S. A.

* * *

"His Master's Voice" (England) has just published its 1951/52 catalog, and these will be of prime interest to collectors of imported records. A limited number has been obtained by the publishers of THE NEW RECORDS and may be ordered at 50c each (postpaid in U. S. A.).

* * *

Two little albums published by the Brochés Institute of Languages have recently come to our attention, entitled "Speak French" and "Speak Spanish," respectively; they are designed to help one find his way around in both of these languages. Each album contains two 10-inch unbreakable discs and a 40-page textbook, and the records will play on any 78 rpm phonograph. The price of each set is \$3.95.

Readers will recall that in January 1950 we reviewed the Holt "Getting Around in French"

and "Getting Around in Spanish" in these columns. As we predicted, these albums did "enjoy a wide and substantial sale;" we must, however, say that these Brocheophone sets (as M. Brochés calls them) are superior even to the Holt sets, for the following reasons: first, because the Brocheophone contains more words (about 1,000); and secondly, because there is no English spoken on the Brocheophone records, which means that no space on the record is wasted repeating something which the student already knows. Needless to say, however, the English translations are given in the accompanying textbook.

These Brocheophone sets should be a real help to the student—he should easily get his ear attuned to the pronunciation by repeatedly playing these discs and should firmly establish in his mind a basic travel vocabulary. A feature of each set is that over half the textbook is devoted to the names of foods, so that the "Speak French" set should help those of us who find ourselves lost when reading a French menu.

If your local dealer cannot supply these sets, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will receive prompt attention.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4501) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4502) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4503) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4504) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4505) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastorale"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4506) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4507) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125** ("Choral"). Louise Helletsgruber (soprano); Rosette Anday (contralto); Georg Maikl (tenor); Richard Mayr (basso); with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-165) \$12.11

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4510) \$5.45.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4511) \$5.45.

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4512) \$5.45.

Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4513) \$5.45.

The recordings listed above are certainly a dream come true. Weingartner's admirers, and they are legion throughout the musical world, have doubtless dreamed, since the advent of LP recording, of having all of the Beethoven and Brahms symphonies conducted by the great master on LP discs. Columbia has made this possible and now anyone may have them. All one needs is the price and about two inches of space on his record shelf.

Columbia has done a reasonably good job in transferring these older recordings to LP discs, and

we believe that those persons interested in these Weingartner versions will be satisfied with them. However, if you are more interested in reproduction than in interpretation we suggest that you make comparisons before you make your decision.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5089) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5096) \$5.95.

With Westminster, Concert Hall, and several other "independents" filling their catalogs with music off the beaten path, they are gradually turning to more familiar fare and issuing some of the standard classics, done by European orchestras. They have some high marks at which to aim, for the LP catalogs contain some magnificent renditions of these masterpieces. The two in question provide a choice example. We would not choose either of these over the competitive versions on Victor or Columbia, or even on London. Scherchen is a fine conductor, and a highly respected one in Europe, but his performances of these two works does not move us as do some others. For example, his Beethoven *Seventh* is an academic and well interpreted work, yet he never breathes much life or vitality into this rhythmic symphony, which can stand a full-blooded treatment. The first movement is downright dull, the second accurate but rather dull, the third and fourth are good but do not atone for the shortcomings of the first two movements. He gains by a deliberate tempo in the clarity achieved, but the over-all effect is not nearly buoyant enough for this work. You will find much more of interest in either the Münch, Kleiber, or Toscanini versions; our preference in Münch, (*V-LM-1034) or Toscanini (*V-LCT-1013).

As for the Tchaikovsky *Fourth*, Kleiber, Koussevitzky, or Ormandy have more to say, and say it more eloquently. Scherchen does a better job with this than with the Beethoven, but he cannot bear comparison with Ormandy's set (*C-ML-4050) which we think is about tops in a *Fourth*. The Philadelphia Orchestra outplays the Vienna in this case very noticeably—compare the brass parts and the accuracy of the strings. This war horse can stand virtuoso playing of the first order, and it gets just that from either Ormandy or Koussevitzky. The reproduction of these Westminsterers is very fine, and if an academic reading is what you are after, these discs will fill the bill. Otherwise, stick to the Philadelphians or the Bostonians for either of these staple items. S.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). The New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-432) \$5.95.

Enrique Jorda is a conductor whose work we have admired previously in these columns, and this time

we would give his reading of the *New World* mighty high praise were it not for the formidable competition he has. Stokowski and Ormandy each have LP's that have enjoyed a wide acceptance, and justly so, for they each have notably fine recordings. Jorda's orchestra, the New Symphony, is not the crack ensemble that our local boys have at their command. The reproduction of the new Jorda disc is splendid, and on some instruments may sound better than either of the others, but in nearly every case any of these three will sound very fine—we found them all excellent on our phonograph. Ormandy (*C-ML-4023) gives this music a thorough interpretation that does not lean to excesses in any direction, but has a cumulative power that is most persuasive. Stokowski (*V-LM-1013) has his little mannerisms in spots, but in all, it is a very communicative performance, and one that has become familiar and endeared itself to his followers. There are many moments of superlative beauty in his recording. Jorda is inclined to overstress brass parts and inner lines in an effort to achieve something larger and different. He is successful in just that direction, but the effect is not well taken in several instances, in our opinion. A few of his ideas, we must admit, are rather clever and effective. We would still take Ormandy or Stokowski in this work, and suggest you choose between the two of them.

The second movement, *Largo*, is so well known that we often forget the end movements of this symphony; both of them are great symphonic writing. You will recall that this was actually Dvořák's ninth and last symphony, though it is called No. 5. It was written in 1893, which makes it not so old as often believed. The sub-title "From the New World" implies an exiled composer's longing for his homeland, rather than that the work is a portrait of America. Despite some of its Americanized themes, the majority of the melodies are unmistakably Czech in character. S.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7230) \$5.95.

This recording is a recorded concert performance of 1945. Concert performances often have an inspiration and atmosphere lacking in studio recording sessions; something like an oratorio, even operatic performances can gain from being concert recordings, or radio recordings. The present recording is a prime example of what should not be released on discs by way of recorded concert performances, and is the sole basis for this review. There are, in the first place, any number of fine recordings of the Franck Symphony; another one is not a necessity, and a poor one is uncalled for. The audience at this concert was of the sneezing, coughing, restless variety, and their every noise has been picked up with great fidelity. You will hear coughs and other noises throughout the entire work, and believe us, they are annoying—very annoying! If this were some rarely

performed masterpiece, there would be some reason for issuing such a disc, but not of such a repertory staple as this one.

As for the actual performance of the music, that too, is disappointing. We have generally admired most of Furtwängler's work, and consider him one of the great conductors of the day; but we think he does a pretty poor job with the Franck *Symphony*. There are extreme exaggerations of tempo and the whole thing is laced with peculiar little speed-ups in tempo and other mannerisms that detract far more than they add. Furthermore, the Vienna Philharmonic of 1945 was not the prize orchestra of its pre-war years, nor as good as it is today. Their playing is quite ordinary, and would never be associated with their illustrious name. Whatever else we could say would probably not be complimentary, so we will sign off with the previously stated theory, that record companies should listen to their own discs carefully before issuing them. S.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 3, Op. 27 ("Sinfonia Espansiva"). Inger Lis Hassing (soprano) and Erik Sjöberg (baritone) with the Radio Symphony Orchestra (Copenhagen) conducted by Erik Tuxen. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-100) \$5.95.

Carl Nielsen is, perhaps, the only "modern" (he died in 1931) Danish composer known to any extent outside his native land. The Danish record catalogs contain a tremendous amount of his music, but this is the first of his works to appear on LP. Nielsen was a pupil of Nils Gade, the only other Danish musician to obtain a reputation that might be termed international.

The *Third Symphony*, subtitled *Sinfonia Espansiva*, is a full scale symphonic enterprise in the usual four movements. It has novelty in the inclusion of two voices in the second movement. Musically the work derives from the romantic symphonies of the middle and late nineteenth century. It is distinctly Nordic in flavor, although its tunes lack the virility of Sibelius or Kilpinen.

The four movements, however, are full of melodies and there are climaxes of considerable power. The use of voices in the slow movement is interesting. There are no words, merely vocalization; the voice here becomes an orchestral instrument. Miss Hassing and Mr. Sjöberg sing (or vocalize) with accuracy and beauty of tone.

The scherzo is odd in that it has none of the bustle and scurrying around usually associated with this form. It is rather Brahmsian in spirit and execution. The last movement is a spiritual summation of the three preceding sections, *à la* Bruckner, only not so verbose.

The artists and orchestra, under Erik Tuxen, give a careful and considered performance. Technically the orchestra seems the equal of any of our major orchestras; the soloists in the wind choirs are especially effective. The recording is very good—belying the supposition that this is, in all probability, an LP

pressing of the Nordisk Polyphon (Danish Decca Agency) recording made in Denmark prior to 1948. W.

Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat. One side, and **Schubert: (17) Deutsche Tänze** ("German Dances"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7280) \$5.95.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 31 in D, K. 297** ("Paris"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4474) \$5.45.

Mozart: Symphony No. 24 in B-flat, K. 182. Ton-Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Michael. One-half side, and **Mozart: March in F, K. 248** and **Mozart: Divertimento No. 10 in F, K. 247.** Ton-Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-545) \$5.95.

This group of discs offers a variety of Mozart and Schubert from the most familiar to some LP firsts. The most familiar is the *Unfinished* in the renowned Beecham performance. His older Columbia set was generally conceded to be the last word on the subject, so the present set should find a ready market. We thought the reading a typical Beecham accomplishment of throwing new light on the subject. Several of his ideas are unique, notably the deliberate tempo in parts of the second movement, but it all adds up to something profound when it comes from Beecham. We would take this as first choice of the many existing LP's, and still retain a strong feeling for the Heger performance on Mercury and the Walter-Philadelphia version on Columbia (which the present disc is to replace). Those who like it plushy may find Koussevitzky to their taste; while the Toscanini admirers will cling to his version, for which one thing can be said: it is the highest powered of them all, if that is what is needed in this work.

Beecham offers a superb reading of the Mozart "Paris" Symphony, a pure delight in every respect and preferable to the other version by Dorati. The Period disc, while confusingly labeled, contains a feast of Mozart playing which will appeal strongly to a large group of Mozartians who like his *Divertimentos*, *Serenades*, and such, played by a small group. Here are two full sides played by a small and competent, in fact thoroughly excellent, group of musicians who have an immediately noticeable style and flair for Mozart. The reproduction is brutally clear, and fortunately not dry—nor dead, resulting in something really lovely. The symphony is a short affair of three movements (no Minuet); the *March K. 248*, although not directly appended to the *Divertimento* in the autograph, has never been questioned as belonging to the *Divertimento*, to be used as introduction and perhaps also as conclusion. It is nice to have it included on this disc.

The Schubert *Fifth Symphony*, one of his very loveliest and a prime favorite of ours, is enjoying its fourth LP recording, and it should really enjoy this one for it is played with fine feeling for its graceful texture. Moralt's touch is just right in this, as it is also on the reverse of the disc for the *German Dances*. As this is the only disc with the symphony complete on one side, with another work thrown in for good measure, it is recommended as the best buy. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4472) \$5.45.

The LP lists now have half a dozen versions of the Brahms *Fourth*, several of which are very fine. Columbia saw fit to replace this symphony as recorded by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra with one by Walter and the New York Philharmonic. The newer disc is naturally of better fidelity, and the Philharmonic under Walter always sounds good—invariably better than under most other conductors. We doubt that the orchestral quality is as good as the older Philadelphia recording. We have no doubt however, that the interpretation and performance are better for this was never considered one of Ormandy's best disc efforts. Walter stays pretty close to the traditional way of doing this symphony, and the results are a good, solid reading of authority and strength, emotionally alive but well controlled.

We would recommend the new Walter performance to anyone, but would suggest most folks try also the Münch interpretation with the Boston Symphony (*V-LM-1086) (TNR Nov. '50). Münch's reading is rather more individual, but not excessively so; we found it fresh, arresting and exciting, and we think he has some splendid ideas. The over-all pattern is wonderful, culminating in a finale of great power. The choice is between Walter and Münch. Ormandy has already been dealt out, Krips on London was much too weak in this work, while de Sabata on Decca was dry, fussy and unappealing.

Brahms himself directed the first performance of the E minor Symphony at Meiningen on October 25, 1885. There are varying reports as to its reception then, but the Duke of Meiningen was so deeply impressed that he requested the symphony be repeated immediately for himself alone. Frederic Lamond, the distinguished pianist, who had been present at the premiere, listened to the repetition from a concealed place. Fifty years later he wrote, "The performance stays vividly in my mind. I have heard consummate performances in later years, but never has the overpowering and masterly finale sounded with such conviction as in the darkened empty theatre where Brahms, like a mighty conjuror, played with the assembled group of musicians for the listening Duke of Meiningen. . . . I left the hall with a sense of having lived through the greatest experi-

ence that life had ever offered me."

S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 38 ("Spring"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 4-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1608) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1190) \$5.72.

Schumann went to considerable pains to let everyone know that his first symphony was a "spring" symphony. He pleaded with the conductor to infuse the orchestra with a sort of longing for the spring, specifying in minute detail what he had in mind. He did not put down specific titles for each movement lest it put a too literal restriction on an appreciation of this music; however, he had considered using titles and had four selected. Actually the symphony was written in February and mostly at night, so the period in which the work was produced was not so much a calendar season but a personal, emotional, and romantic springtime for Robert Schumann. After a four-year courtship of Clara Wieck, she and Robert were married on the eve of her twenty-first birthday, September 12, 1840. And to the months following their marriage we owe the first two symphonies and Schumann's growing interest in larger musical forms. Like spring, music was bursting out in Schumann's heart and he worked feverishly, accomplishing a great deal. By the time he addressed himself to the composition of the *B-flat Symphony* he was in a happy, inspired stride he never surpassed. The entire symphony was written in four days. "Sketched January 23 to 26, 1841," the composer noted in his diary, and the following day immediately began the arduous task of scoring the work, which chore occupied him until the end of February. Mendelssohn conducted the first performance of the work on March 31 at a Gewandhaus concert.

The *Spring Symphony* is a work firmly entrenched in the repertoire, and it will remain so, as long as romantic German music is played, for it is a model of its kind, the fresh spontaneous creation of a poet, a genius, and a young man. Charles Münch leads the Boston Orchestra in a performance thoroughly imbued with the type of spring Schumann was experiencing. Here is real, honest excitement, not artificial nor superficial, but good, heartfelt joy. This is the best performance, as well as the best recording, we can recall of this delightful music.

S.

Music of Gershwin. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4481) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Cuban Overture*; *Highlights from "Porgy and Bess"*; *Mine*; and *Love Walked In*.

Of particular interest on this LP disc is the first complete recorded performance of Gershwin's *Cuban Overture*. This piece dates from 1932 and was composed upon the author's return from a short vacation trip to Havana. Musically it may not amount to much, but it is certainly colorful and exciting—it is said to be Gershwin's quick musical impression of the gaiety, flavor and animation of the Cuban capital.

The balance of this disc is given over to several well-known Gershwin selections.

Rossini: La Cambiale di Matrimonio—Overture. One side, and **Chabrier: España-Rapsodie.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-11) \$2.85.

Reznicek: Donna Diana—Overture, and Nicolai: The Merry Wives of Windsor—Overture. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: May Night—Overture.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-120) \$3.

As we have often remarked, there is seemingly always a demand for good recordings of overtures. Thus the two little LP discs listed above, which contain very excellent recordings by two English orchestras, should enjoy a wide popularity. Of particular interest was the Rossini overture to his opera, *La Cambiale di Matrimonio*—an item that was entirely new to us.

A Strauss Festival. Austria State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oscar Strauss. 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-47) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *Die Fledermaus—Overture, Prince Methusalem—Overture* (Johann Strauss); *Dorfschwalben aus Österreich—Waltz* (Josef Strauss); *Waltz Dream—G'stellte Mädeln, Waltz Dream—Improvisations, The Chocolate Soldier—My Hero, Rund um die Liebe—Overture* (Oscar Strauss).

The Strauss Dynasty. Austria State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oscar Strauss. 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-48) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *Waltz Dream—Da draussen in duftenden Garten, The Last Waltz—Improvisations, Marietta—Improvisations, The Chocolate Soldier—Selections* (Oscar Strauss); *Radetsky March* (Johann Strauss, Sr.); *Eine Nacht in Venedig—Overture* (Johann Strauss, Jr.); *Sphärenklänge—Waltz* (Josef Strauss); *Bahn Frei—Polka* (Eduard Strauss).

These two LP discs contain a sumptuous feast of Strauss music—four or five of the famous composers of that name are represented under the baton of the eighty-two year old Oscar, of *Chocolate Soldier* fame. This gay musical melange is served in true Viennese style and to add spice to this otherwise orchestral concert, Hilde Konetzni (soprano) of the Vienna State Opera sings a couple of selections—*My Hero* from "The Chocolate Soldier" and *Da draussen in duftenden Garten* from "The Waltz Dream."

CONCERTO

Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Lili Kraus (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7270) \$5.95.

A complete hearing of this recording plus a



number of comparisons (in part) with several other LP discs of the work leaves us with the impression that this is quite the finest recording of the work we ever heard. Lili Kraus is magnificent in all three movements; her performance of the first movement is exactly as you want it to be played, a model of clarity, power, and superb texture. The Vienna Symphony under Moralt provides an accompaniment of the first order, completely in accord with the soloist, and a great orchestral performance of its own. And of all the recordings of the work, the reproduction of this disc is the best from every standpoint; good, bold, ringing piano tone—but not hard and clangy, good orchestral tone, and perfect balance between the two.

Considering the nature of the first two piano concertos, Beethoven's *Third* was more than a surprise. It was a revolution. The first two were primarily based on the Haydn-Mozart patterns. There were indications, especially in the finale of the First, that Beethoven was beginning to feel his strength; but those indications were hardly enough to point to the strength and intensity contained in the first movement of the Third, no more than that the first two symphonies pointed to the might of the Third "Eroica." The *Third* is probably the biggest concerto in every way that had ever been composed up to that time. Mozart's C minor Concerto may have been greater and more mature, but it did not have the muscular, essentially symphonic conception of Beethoven's C minor. Beethoven knew quite well that he had created something special in this concerto. He let his publishers know that his earlier music could not be compared with it, and implied that now he was entering on a new stage in his development. You will appreciate this fully after hearing the present recording, which is cast in an appropriate mold that perfectly conveys the grandeur of this beautiful creation. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 75.

One-half side, and **Tchaikovsky: Concert-Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 56.** Mewton-Wood (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1126) \$5.95.

Here is something new in Tchaikovsky, and something mighty good. We enjoyed these two works even more than the *Second Piano Concerto*, which is a fine though neglected work too. The *Third Concerto*, here recorded, is a one movement work in large sonata form. It was based on material originally intended for a symphony, but Tchaikovsky did such a clever job of adaptation that it is difficult to imagine where the piano part actually takes over material intended for orchestral fabric. It is a vigorous work and of great appeal.

We were amazed at the *Concert-Fantasia*, a work which most certainly should be heard in concert halls. A discarded sketch of the first movement of the third orchestral suite became the basis of the

second movement of this fantasia. The work is in two movements; the first entitled *Quasi rondo*, and the second, *Contrasts*, consisting of a slow movement and finale which are run together. The first movement's title *Quasi rondo* is odd, for it contains no rondo elements; it is in sonata form. The exception is that the development section is replaced by an eleven-page cadenza. The exposition and recapitulation each last about three minutes, while the cadenza takes some eight or nine to play. The movement has charm of manner, elegance of craftsmanship and a high entertainment value. The cadenza introduces two new melodic ideas, expansive in themselves and luxuriantly developed. The thematic material grows in stature as the cadenza proceeds and the piano writing is brilliant, not bombastic. It is a magnificent thing, and positively thrilling. Thrilling also, and well calculated to be just that, is the end of the concerto—in today's accepted parlance, it's a killer!

If you are looking for something new and exciting in piano concertos but easy to take and of a familiar style, this disc is it. Mewton-Wood plays with breadth and bravura, and with a real feeling for the music; conductor Goehr has equally strong convictions about the matters at hand. S.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22.

Arthur Sandford (piano) with the Hastings Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Bath. One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Henry VIII—Ballet Music.** Hastings Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Bath. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3028) \$5.95.

This disc would be quite a value if the performing artists were of the very first rank; but alas! They are not. Sandford is a pretty fair pianist but lacks that polish which would make him really great. His playing has moments of virtuosity, and it usually has a good measure of musicianship, not always under the best control. His performance of the Saint-Saëns *Second Concerto* is therefore not as good as the Lympany one (*L-LPS-408). The London recording is on two sides of a 10" disc, where the Allegro is complete on one side of a 12" disc.

The reverse of the Allegro has Saint-Saëns' Ballet Music from *Henry VIII*, consisting of four sections: Introduction, Entry of the Clans; Scots Idyll; Gypsy Dance; and Jig and Finale. This ballet is from his opera *Henry VIII* and consists of a suite of Scottish Dances performed before the Papal Legate at Richmond. The composer made a special study of British music and used several ancient and traditional tunes throughout the opera. The ballet uses a number of these, though Saint-Saëns, had he been better informed, might have known that "The Miller of Dee" which forms the principal theme of the first dance, comes of Cheshire, and does not refer to the Scottish river Dee. The second movement introduces "Jock the Laird's Brother."

All of these formal facts which we gleaned from the notes will hardly affect the listening enjoyment of most of us, for this is ballet music, typical in

every respect, and with a definite English flavor. The performance is a sympathetic one as led by John Bath, but his Hastings Orchestra is not one of the world's great orchestras. They are better after they get warmed up, for the last half of the disc is better played than the first half. If you are not a stickler for orchestral accuracy you may not notice this orchestra's shortcomings. The reproduction is very good on both sides of the disc; and of course, the value is good, for it contains a lot of music. S.

Brahms: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77. Peter Rybar (violin) with the West Austrian Radio Orchestra conducted by Hans Moltkau. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1113) \$5.95.

After hearing this disc once through, we played parts of it over again and compared it with some other existing LP versions. This time we were not the record reviewer, rather we pretended to be sitting in the chair of a head of the Concert Hall Society outfit, and were listening to pass judgment on this record proposed for release. We turned to another chap in the organization and asked why he thought this record of the Brahms *Violin Concerto* would prove a salable item. In our opinion the answers were weak. Peter Rybar is hardly a more salable name than Menuhin or Szigeti—or for that matter, Renardy. A comparison of the playing showed him to be no better a fiddler than any of these other three, his tone is inclined to be coarse or wiry, and the reproduction our European affiliates obtained was also wiry. As for the accompanying orchestra, company pride could not keep us from admitting that Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, Münch and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and Furtwängler and Lucerne Festival Orchestra all had it over this West Austrian Radio Orchestra under Hans Moltkau—way, way over this group. After all, Peter Rybar is a good violinist, his interpretation is sincere and a valid one; with a better accompanying group and sweeter reproduction it might be a better performance on discs. But as it stands, it just isn't strong enough competition for these other three LP discs. Our friend said that may be so, but here is the disc and we are committed to release it, so let's see what happens.

What happens in our opinion is just as stated above, and we recommend any of the other three as being better. Szigeti and Ormandy are the most Brahmsian, Menuhin and Furtwängler give a spacious and rather individual reading, Renardy and Münch intense and brilliant and play with fine finish. For about the same price, this present disc is not worth the money. S.

Brahms: Double Concerto in A minor, Op. 102. Nathan Milstein (violin) and Gregor Piatigorsky (violin) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-7" discs in box (8V-WDM-1609) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1191) \$5.72.

The Brahms *Double Concerto* recorded by Heifetz,

Feuermann, Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra has long been considered a great recording, although many thought it lacking in poetry. Its brilliance is acknowledged and praised, but its interpretation is found wanting. Now reissued on LP, this older version may now be compared to the new one under consideration. Those who wanted something deeper and more searching will find the newer version by Milstein and Piatigorsky worth study. There is a poetry here that is becoming to a work of this magnitude, one of Brahms' richest, most varied, and most stimulating works. There is a touch of every facet of the mature Brahms in it. Milstein and Piatigorsky play with an easy command of the technical difficulties, devoting their efforts to carving the beauties of this work; singly and together they produce music of serene beauty and telling power and always music of profound thoughtfulness. It is truly a great performance, ably backed by Reiner and the orchestra. Anyone not yet familiar with this work will find it equally as interesting as any of the other Brahms concertos. This disc should gain for it many new friends.

Much of Brahms' concern over the form of this work came about over the fact that in the *Double Concerto* he was venturing into the field of concerto grosso, which, with the exception of the Beethoven's *Triple Concerto*, had been abandoned for about a century. His fears were well founded, for a great many of his staunchest supporters found his use of this old form, despite his modern and masterly handling of it, both mystifying and unnatural. The fact remains that Brahms had something vital and compelling to say, and that the voices to say it were the violin, the cello, and the orchestra. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 9 in C., Op. 59, No. 3 ("Rasoumovsky No. 3"). One and one-half sides, and **Schubert: Quartettsatz in C minor, Op. Posth.** New Italian Quartet: Paolo Borciani, Elisa Pegreff (violins); Piero Farulli (viola); Franco Rossi (violin). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-321) \$5.95.

Schumann: Quartet No. 2 in F, Op. 41, No. 2. One side, and **Verdi: Quartet in E minor.** New Italian Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-323) \$5.95.

We have been awaiting with much interest the first recordings to be made available in this country of the New Italian Quartet—this famous group consisting of a girl and three boys who made such a sensation throughout the United States and Canada in a series of over thirty concerts ending with a great triumph in a recital in New York last December.

This novel quartet was formed in Italy after World War II by a group of young players whose average age now is but twenty-nine years. The charm of their concerts, in addition to their impeccable

playing, is the seeming informality of the whole affair. They play without scores and seem to be thoroughly enjoying themselves as evidenced by the smiles on their faces when they are playing a particularly pleasing melody. At the close of their New York recital they responded to the "bravos" and calls for "More, more" with two encores from their repertoire of some thirty-two quartets which these remarkable players have committed to memory.

The real test comes when music lovers who have not seen and heard this Quartet in the concert hall listen to their records. We were in that position and we found their renditions certainly thrilling. At the close of the "Rasoumovsky No. 3" we had the urge to shout "Bravo!" Perhaps you will too when you hear it.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132. Paganini Quartet. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1577) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (øV-LM-1179) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5104) \$5.95.

Now we have four LP versions of Beethoven's *Quartet, Opus 132*. You may make your choice among recordings by the Budapest, Griller, Paganini or the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartets. Our choice would be either the Budapest version (*C-ML-4006) or the Paganini recording listed above.

Purcell: Chaconne in G minor ("Great") and Purcell: (9) Four Part Fantasias and Purcell: Fantasia on One Note. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-420) \$5.95.

Purcell: (3) Three Part Fantasias. London String Trio. One-half side, and **Purcell: Fantasia on One Note.** Aeolian String Quartet with Emmanuel Hurwitz (violin). And **Purcell: (9) Four Part Fantasias.** Aeolian String Quartet. 2-10" discs in folder (*AL-AL-119) \$8.90.

Those interested in the music of the great English composer, Henry Purcell (1658-95), will doubtless wish to investigate the LP discs listed above. The space available does not permit our considering each of the several selections, but we can say that they have been nicely played and satisfactorily recorded.

Schubert: Octet in F, Op. 166. Konzerthaus String Quartet with Leopold Wlach (clarinet); Karl Oehlberger (bassoon); Gottfried von Freiberg (horn); Josef Hermann (bass). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5094) \$5.95.

Schubert: Octet in F, Op. 166. Octet of the Vienna Symphony. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6970) \$5.95.

Schubert: Octet in F, Op. 166. Stradivari Records Chamber Society conducted by Henri Nosco. 1-12" disc (*STRADIVARI STR-603) \$5.95.

Here is a glowing example of an uneconomical practice in the record industry. Three independent record publishers each issuing a recording of a com-

paratively unimportant opus. We do not wish to infer that this Schubert work is not worthy of recording, but as far as general sales go it is unimportant, and one adequate version is certainly enough. However, we have listed above the three recordings in the order of our preference—the Westminster version is our first choice.

Mozart: Quintet in A for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581. Benny Goodman (clarinet) with the American Art Quartet: E. Shapiro, R. Sushel (violins); V. Majewski (viola); V. Gottlieb (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4483) \$5.45.

Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 614. One side, and **Mozart: Quintet in G minor, K. 516.** Budapest String Quartet, with Milton Katims (viola). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4469) \$5.45.

Mozart: Quartet No. 21 in D, K. 575. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 20 in A, K. 499.** Stuyvesant String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*PHILHARMONIA PH-105) \$5.95.

All of the Mozart chamber works listed above are already available on other LP discs. We wish that we had space to compare each of the selections with the other recorded versions available but this is impossible. About all that we can do is to list them and state that technically and musically they are entirely satisfactory. We might mention that we were very much impressed with the excellence of the reproduction achieved by Philharmonia in recording the Stuyvesant String Quartet.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 158 ("Der Friede sei mit dir") ("Easter"). (Sung in German). Soloists with Chorus and Chamber Orchestra of the Bach Cantata Circle (New York) conducted by Michael Hauptmann. One side, and **Bach: (5) Geistliche Lieder.** (Sung in German). James Eby (basso) accompanied by Peter Makas (violoncello) and Nils Groen (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*BACH SOCIETY LX-7001) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 9 ("Es ist das Heil uns kommen her"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 137 ("Lobe den Herrn, den mächtigen König der Ehren").** (Sung in German). Soloists with the Stuttgart Choral Society and the Bach Orchestra of Stuttgart conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*RENAISSANCE X-37) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 4 ("Christ lag in Todesbanden"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Chorus of the State School for Music (Frankfurt) and the Göttingen Bach Festival Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7523) \$3.85.

Of the four *Cantatas* listed above, three, numbers 9, 137 and 158 are new to records. Also, the *Five Geistliche Lieder* are making their initial LP appearance. The *Cantata No. 4* is available in two other versions, one by the Robert Shaw Chorale (which

is only fair) and another by Felix Prohaska and a Viennese group (which will probably be reviewed at a later date).

Cantata No. 158 "Der Friede sei mit dir" is presumably an Easter Cantata and dates from about 1708-1717. Stylistically this *Cantata* differs from many of the others in that there is neither a *sinfonia* nor an opening chorus. The music is introspective and less joyful in character than the other music Bach wrote for this season. The soloists are adequate, the principal singer being the young Canadian basso, James Eby. Mr. Eby has a big voice that will undoubtedly improve over the years. More experience is indicated but this lack does not mitigate too strongly against his successful projection of the music. Of considerable interest are the *Five Geistliche Lieder*, taken from the *Schmelli Gesangbuch* and the *Anna Magdalena Bach Gesangbuch*.

The two *Cantatas* on the Renaissance disc are excellent. The Stuttgart groups under Hans Grischkat have recorded several other Bach *Cantatas* and their work on this disc is, as usual, distinguished by clarity, sincerity and musicianship of a high order.

The Decca recording of the great *Christ lag in Todesbanden* is a disappointment. The performance is pedestrian and the recording is dull. Considerable interest attached to the appearance of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau who has been heralded as the successor of or even superior to Gerhard Hüsch. Judging from this record such claims are sheer nonsense. He has a youthful baritone, but lacks completely the great artistry of Hüsch.

The recording in the Bach Society disc is a superlative job—made under the direction of Peter Bartók. The Renaissance recording is also a sterling accomplishment. The Decca, as pointed out above, is dull and on the muddy side. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 6 ("Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Stuttgart Choral Society and the Bach Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 19** ("Es erhüb sich ein Streit"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Stuttgart Choral Society and the Ton-Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*RENAISSANCE X-34) \$5.95.

The release of these two Cantatas of Bach brings the total number available on LP discs to twenty-eight! This is relatively few when one considers Bach wrote over two hundred works in this form, but it is astonishing when one considers that the 1948 edition of the Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia lists only seven complete recordings. Even more astonishing is the lack of duplication, for to date each of the twenty-eight has been recorded only once.

The two Cantatas listed here date from 1725 (#19, *Es erhüb sich ein Streit*), composed for Michaelmas and 1736 (#6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es*

will Abend werden) for performance on the second day of Easter. This latter work is especially beautiful both as to words and music, the bass recitative in particular being applicable to the condition of the world today. This Cantata is also enlivened by the use of old instruments, notably an *oboe di caccia* and a *cello piccolo*. The other work, *Es erhüb sich ein Streit* is based more on Old Testament thoughts and recounts the battle of the Archangel Michael and Satan. It is a spirited and vigorous work.

The performances, as recorded by Renaissance, are authentic in conception and projection. The soloists are adequate if not distinguished. Hans Grischkat directs the orchestras chorus and soloists with care and understanding, lending an air of distinction to the enterprise—a considerable feat considering the relatively modest forces at his disposal.

The recording is good, and complete German-English texts for each work have been included. The disc is worthy of investigation. W.

Vittoria: Mass ("O magnum Mysterium"). One side, and **Vittoria: Mass** ("O quam gloriosum"). (Sung in Latin). Welch Chorale directed by James P. Welch. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3034) \$5.95.

Buxtehude: Missa Brevis and **Buxtehude: In Te Domine speravi**. One side, and **Buxtehude: Aperite mihi portas justitiae** and **Buxtehude: Jesu dulcis memoria**. Hastings Chorale directed by John Bath. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3035) \$5.95.

Sacred Music of the 17th Century. Purcell Performing Society directed by John Reymes King. 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3038) \$5.95.

The three records listed above are a mixed blessing. One is quite good, one is mediocre, the third poor. This is unfortunate in more ways than one. It would seem that record companies rely on the composer's name to sell their discs. If this is so, it seems hardly necessary to point out that it is an insufficient reason. Then, too, the choice of recording artists show a lack of discrimination on the part of the issuing company; for in two instances here, the groups are well beyond their depth.

The most satisfactory disc is the one of the two Vittoria *Masses*. The Welch Chorale has recorded previously and the present disc maintains the high standard attained by such sets as the Palestrina *Masses* and others. Historically and artistically, the music of Vittoria (1540-1611) is of absorbing interest. With Palestrina, he is one of the giants of the 16th Century and it is a source of endless pleasure to compare, at one's leisure, the many differences and similarities of these two pioneers in baroque music. The disc is well recorded.

Going down scale, the Buxtehude record comes next. Here one senses an unfamiliarity on the part of the recording group with its material. They seem unsure and thus content themselves with singing the notes accurately. Buxtehude deserves and needs better treatment. Those who own or remember the

Victor disc of the motet *Aperite mihi portas justitiae* will sense at once the vast difference understanding makes in a work of this nature. Also included are a *Missa Brevis*, another motet, and a short cantata.

The poorest of the three records is a collection of Gibbons, Philips and Locke, entitled *Sacred Music of the 17th Century*. Undistinguished singing and direction are the outstanding features of the recording. Again, it is a case of the artists attempting music for which they lack the required ability and musicianship. The recording is also below standard.

W.

A Treasury of Easter Songs. (Sung in English, German, and Latin). Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1623) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1201) \$5.72.

Certainly anyone interested in Easter music can find several pleasing selections among the twenty pieces on this unusual LP disc. Mr. Shaw has chosen these selections with extreme care. He seemingly had in mind pieces of musical merit with a very wide variety of appeal. Included on this record are traditional German, Dutch, French, Welsh, Russian and Scotch Easter carols together with Negro Spirituals and Early American religious ballads—all sung artistically with the highest regard for good taste.

The Don Cossacks on Parade. (Sung in Russian). Don Cossack Chorus directed by Serge Jaroff. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4473) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Green Grass; Kalinka; In the Don Valley; Dark Eyes; Two Guitars; Along the St. Petersburg Road; Old Waltz; Life for the Czar* (Glinka)—Selections; *Songs* (Gretchaninov).

As it has been some time since a new record by the Don Cossack's has been issued, their many admirers will doubtless be very much interested in this one. It is typical Don Cossack recital with a number of folk songs, romantic love ballads, military marching songs and selections from Glinka's opera *Life for the Czar* all included. If you like the Don Cossack's, this one is for you.

OPERA



Puccini: La Tosca (complete). (Sung in Italian). Adriana Guerrini (soprano); Gianni Poggi (tenor); Paolo Silveri (baritone); with supporting soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1230) \$11.90.

This is the third appearance of Puccini's sordid thriller on LP records and it is a vast improvement, vocally and artistically, over previous issues. Both the Westminster set (TNR Mar. '52) and the Remington left a lot to be desired from an interpretive standpoint.

Vocal honors must be divided equally among the

principals. Adriana Guerrini, in the role of Floria Tosca, brings, in addition to a fine lyrico-dramatic soprano voice, an understanding and a wealth of expression that make her performance an outstanding one. In the famous *Vissi d'Arte* and in the concerted numbers she sings with pure tone and genuine feeling. Gianni Poggi is a superb Caravadosi. His is a real Italian tenor, open and clear throughout its considerable range. Poggi's performance is always credible and in good taste, both in the quieter moments as well as in those where he is bursting with passion. Paolo Silveri is a sombre-voiced Barone Scarpia, rather dignified in fact. This facet of the Barone's character is usually overlooked by many artists (sic!) who invariably rave and rant in a manner that good sense should guard them against. Silveri's only drawback is his inability to sustain a high note—his voice wobbles noticeably on such occasions.

Another of the sets admirable features is the excellence of the minor characters. In this performance Angelotti (Jan Emanuel) emerges as a real person, while the Sagrestano (Carlo Badioli) is not silly, just convincing. Spoletta, in the person of Armando Benzi is very real, a veritable lick-spittle.

Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, the conductor, is new to the Cetra series and does a fine job. His tempi are well chosen and there is never anything arbitrary in his conception. The orchestra and chorus perform in knowing fashion. Excellent recording is an added feature, as well as careful editing of the tape which makes possible the inclusion of the complete opera on two records—an arrangement that is as admirable as it is economical. A libretto is included. W.

Weber: Abu Hassan. (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano); Erich Witte (tenor); Michael Bohnen (basso); with the Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7029) \$5.95.

This early one act pseudo-oriental opera was written in 1810 when Weber was 24 years old. Musically it is relatively undistinguished, even lightweight. There is nothing in it to prepare one for the *Freischütz* that followed eleven years later. The performance recorded here omits the spoken dialogue and consists of ten numbers, of which only the chorus *Geld, geld* is known to any extent.

The small cast is excellent. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is a sprightly Fatima. Her voice, as many collectors know, is one of the finest on records today. In addition, Mme. Schwarzkopf has a musical intelligence that makes her singing meaningful and lends interest and variety to her characterizations. Erich Witte is a good German tenor. This means he sings well in a somewhat throaty voice—his tenor is somewhat baritone in quality. He does very well in the aria *Ich gebe Gásteren* and in the duets and ensemble numbers Herr Witte comports himself with assurance and expansiveness. A surprise, and a very pleasant one, is the Osmín of Michael Bohnen.

Bohnen will be remembered as the very eccentric basso of the Metropolitan Opera Company during the early and middle Twenties. Vocally he is still more than able; and his characterization, in this performance, shows none of the excesses of the earlier years.

The Radio Berlin Chorus and Orchestra under Leopold Ludwig are efficient. The recording is good and a complete text, with comprehensive notes, has been supplied. This disc is principally for those interested in *curiosa*, although others will be able to extract a modicum of enjoyment from it. W.

Wagner: Parsifal (complete). (Sung in German.) Martha Modl (contralto); Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor); George London, Hermann Uhde (baritones); Arnold van Mill, Ludwig Weber (bassos); supporting soloists with the Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 6-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-10) \$35.70.

In one of the most impressive undertakings yet attempted by a recording company, London made a complete recording of *Parsifal* while it was being performed on the stage of the Festival Theatre at Bayreuth. The advantages of such a procedure are many, perhaps the chief of which is that while the singers are on the stage, most of them are more apt to be "in character"—they can get more feeling and expression in their voices than they can in a recording studio. The disadvantages are more of a technical nature, but in this instance London's engineers have done a truly amazing job and the resulting recording is of extraordinarily fine quality.

The cast is of high calibre; indeed, it lives up to what one expects from the home of Wagnerian music drama. The title role is in the hands of a young German tenor, Wolfgang Windgassen. His chief attribute is that he sounds like Parsifal. His is a youthful, at times exuberant voice, always clear and impressive. In the great passage *Amfortas, die Wunde!* he rises to heroic heights, and he is no less effective in the memorable passages that close the work. George London's *Amfortas* is also a sterling characterization, convincing both histrionically and vocally. In the difficult role of Gurnemanz, Ludwig Weber covers himself with glory. He is in about the best voice this reviewer has ever heard him (on records) and his performance is a sincere and moving one. Klingsor is entrusted to Herman Uhde and he makes the most of his villainous role. Martha Modl is a vocally resplendent Kundry, extremely capable, and achieves a variety of expression that adds much to the success of the presentation. Minor roles have been cast with typically German thoroughness.

The enormous task of coordinating the many parts of this "Stage-Consecrating Festival Drama" rests on the capable shoulders of Hans Knappertsbusch. The orchestra and chorus, as well as the soloists, respond perfectly to his inspired direction,

lending a true festival atmosphere to the performance. The set can be recommended without reservation. A German-English libretto has been included, as well as a "psychological diagram" (whatever that may be) by Weiland Wagner, entitled *Das Parsifalkreuz*. W.

Ten Tenors—Ten Arias. Ferruccio Tagliavini, Mario Lanza, James Melton, Jan Peerce, Giuseppe di Stefano, Beniamino Gigli, Set Svanholm, Jussi Bjoerling, John McCormack, and Enrico Caruso with orchestral accompaniments. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1626) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1202) \$5.72.

This remarkable LP disc makes it possible for us to hear and compare ten of the greatest tenors who have appeared before the musical public during the last fifty years. Please note that we said "ten of the greatest" not "the ten greatest." To listen to this disc was a great experience as far as we were concerned, and we believe that those who have followed the course of operatic performances through the years will find it an equally thrilling event. Each artist is represented by an aria for which he is famous. Caruso sings *Vesti la giubba* from "I Pagliacci," McCormack sings *Il mio tesoro* from "Don Giovanni," Tagliavini sings *Una furtiva lagrima* from "L'Elisir d'amore," etc.

A Vienna State Opera Concert. (Sung in German.) Julius Patzak (tenor), Otto Edelmann (bass-baritone) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt and Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-427) \$5.95.

Julius Patzak, who will be fifty-four years old in April of this year, has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the better German tenors. This is especially true in lighter music (witness his superb performances in London's *Fledermaus* and *Zigeunerbaron*) and it is pointed up very strongly by his work on this present record. The two selections from *Contes d'Hoffmann* (sung in German, incidentally) the *Legende de Kleinzech* and a short portion of the *Dieu, quelle ivresse* are delightfully and imaginatively sung. Herr Patzak, however, steps out of character (vocally speaking) in his most ambitious effort, Florestan's *Aria In des lebens Frühlingstagen* from "Fidelio." His attempts to be convincing in this formidable aria are almost ludicrous. In the first place the music makes demands on his voice that he can not meet. Secondly, he is apparently temperamentally not suited for the role—particularly in the latter portion where Florestan becomes very excited and fancies he sees Leonore and sings feelingly about *der Freiheit*. It just does not come off.

The other side of this *Vienna State Opera Concert* (which is a funny thing to call the record) is devoted to the talents of a young bass-baritone, Otto Edelmann. Herr Edelmann sings arias from *Tannhäuser*, (*Ansprache des Landgraves*); *Fidelio* (*Ha, welche Augenblick*); *Falstaff* (*Ehi, taverniere*) and

the finale from *Der Barbiere von Bagdad* (*Salam Aleikum*). The two latter selections are particularly well sung. Edelmann has a good natural voice that has been well trained. There is more than a degree of musical intelligence behind the voice, making for expressive and persuasive performances.

The recording is good, but not the best *ffrr* one has heard. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Moralt (except for Patzak's *Fidelio* effort where the conductor is Karl Böhm) provide the accompaniments, while the Vienna State Opera Chorus is heard to advantage in the *Legende de Kleinzach* and the *Barber of Bagdad* finale. W.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly (complete). (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi (soprano); Nell Rankin (mezzo-soprano); Giuseppe Campora, Piero de Palma (tenors); Giovanni Inghelleri (baritone); supporting soloists with the Chorus and Orchestra of Santa Cecilia (Augusteo, Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLPA-8) \$17.85.

London follows its magnificent recording and performance of *La Bohème* with an equally fine job, both artistically and technically, of *Madama Butterfly*, released this month. If the impact is not as great, and it wasn't to this reviewer, the fault lies in the story and the music composed for it. Both the story and the characters, with the exception of *Butterfly*, have always seemed to be in the worst possible taste and Puccini's "Americanisms," that later ran wild in *Fanciulla del West*, are also apparent here in snatches from *The Star Spangled Banner* as well as in the inevitable *Whiskey* and a new one *Milk-Punch*.

The cast is a strong one and could scarcely be improved upon. Renata Tebaldi is a superb *Butterfly*. Her voice takes on a fragile quality, most suitable and engaging in the early part of the opera and assumes genuinely heroic proportions at the close. Throughout the presentation she is always in character and, as was the case with her *Mimi*, it is the conception of a fine artist, always in good taste and convincing. It is entirely possible that her *Butterfly* is an even greater achievement than her *Mimi*. Giuseppe Campora, as the hero (save the mark) B. F. Pinkerton is in good voice and struggles manfully with the character. Musically his work is excellent but artistically he is handicapped by the role. Giovanni Inghelleri is a sonorous and credible Sharpless. His long experience and suave baritone make his characterization of the weak-kneed consul a polished one. The minor roles are capably handled; special note must be made of the excellent Gogo (Piero de Palma) and Suzuki (Nell Rankin).

Alberto Erede turns in another polished job of direction; tempo, phrasing and general conception of the music are all of a high order. His orchestra and chorus respond with enthusiasm, adding much to the success of the performance. London's recording is all that could be wished for. The only other

LP *Butterfly*, that of Columbia, is definitely put in the shade by this newer effort. W.

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onegin—Letter Scene (Tatiana's Aria). (Sung in Russian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. Three sides, and **Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5**—Aria and Dansa. (Sung in Portuguese). Licia Albanese (soprano) with eight 'celli and bass conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1610) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-142) \$4.67.

Miss Albanese gives highly satisfactory renditions of these two very different selections. We were very much impressed with her "Letter Scene." A year or so ago a 78 rpm recording was released containing only the "Aria" from Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras* by Miss Albanese. The present version contains both the "Aria" and "Danza."

Zandonai: Francesca da Rimini (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia (soprano); Ornella Rovero (mezzo-soprano); Giacinto Prandelli, Mario Carlin (tenors); Mario Tommasini, Carlo Tagliabue (baritones); with supporting soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Antonio Guarnieri. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1229) \$17.85.

Riccardo Zandonai's operas never achieved great popularity outside his native Italy. The best known, *Francesca da Rimini* was given an elaborate American *première* in 1916 by Gatti-Cazzaza and the Metropolitan. The cast included Frances Alda, Giovanni Martinelli and Pasquale Amato, but two seasons is all the piece lasted. A careful hearing of the work, in a good performance, only tends to confirm the judgment of the previous generation. *Francesca da Rimini* is a fine example of a literary libretto and dull, uninspired music. The opera is based on D'Annunzio's play that recounts the familiar 13th century story. The play was "curtailed" by Tito Ricordi for Zandonai's operatic purposes. The world *Première* took place on 19 February 1914.

The performance recorded by Cetra has a particularly fine cast. Maria Caniglia in the title role, is the usual superb soprano of past performances singing with charm and expressiveness. Carlo Tagliabue the veteran baritone, sings *Gianciotto* (The Lame); his voice has lost some of the vigor of former years and there is a sense of effort in the top notes as well as some unsteadiness. His sense of the theatre, however, gets him past these rough spots and his characterization is a fine one. Only praise for Prandelli's portion; his smooth tenor is always a pleasure and his superbly intelligent phrasing and unqualified good taste make all his performances a model of musicianship. Minor roles are, as is usual with Cetra's recordings, capably taken by singers who know their way about.

Recent Cetra offerings seem to be featuring new conductors. One sincerely hopes there will be more

operas by Rossi and Previtale. The present *maestro*, Antonio Guarnieri, seems capable but it is difficult to judge him from this performance. Certainly he has not been able to breathe life into the score, but this is largely due to Zandonai's failings. His orchestra and chorus respond to his direction with enthusiasm, but the whole affair falls flat. R. I. P. W.

Mozart: La Clemenza di Tito, K. 621 (complete). (Sung in Italian). Käthe Nentwig, Friederike Sailer (sopranos); Margot Mangold (mezzo-soprano); Hetty Plümacher (alto); Albert Weikenmeier (tenor); Bruno Müller (basso); with the Swabian Choral Society and the Stuttgart Ton-Studio Orchestra conducted by Gustav Lund. Fives sides, and **Mozart: Les Petits Riens, K. 299b**. Stuttgart Ton-Studio Orchestra conducted by Gustav Lund. 3-12" discs in album (*PE-SPLP-550) \$18.50.

It is generally considered fashionable to dismiss Mozart's last opera, *La Clemenza di Tito*, as a product of haste and fatigue. Written in haste it certainly was, but fatigue is not evident, either here or in *Zauberflöte* or in the *Requiem* on which he worked at the same time. The book, a product of the venerable Metastasio, was considerably altered by the court poet Mazzola. In fact, Mozart made a note in his catalogue to the effect that "... (Tito was) made into a real opera by Signor Mazzola." The form, if not the spirit, of *La Clemenza di Tito* is now that of an *opera buffa*; that is, it is in two acts, there are ensembles, no set formal arias and there is a notable brevity about the work. Mozart did what he could—he was not a revolutionary and no *opera seria* which, *au fond* this work remains, can be made to come truly alive.

The cast of this recording is, in many respects, an admirable one. The taxing role of Vitellia is sung in imposing fashion by Käthe Nentwig. The role of Publius is expertly portrayed by Bruno Müller, while Hetty Plümacher and Fredericke Sailer make an excellent pair of young Roman patricians. The name part is sung by Albert Weikenmeier and he is the weakest member of the cast. His voice is inclined to throatiness and he sings the florid passages with considerable effort. By and large, however, the cast is of good calibre, and there is an atmosphere of conscientiousness about the performance that makes up for any minor vocal deficiencies.

The Swabian Choral Society and the Ton-Studio Orchestra under Gustav Lund are all that is required and a little more. Herr Lund's direction is spirited and in the traditional Mozart manner—that is to say he sets a sensible tempo and does not deviate from it. No sloppy *rubati*—no "giving the score a reading."

Period's recording is fine throughout and the inclusion of the complete Ballet Music *Les Petits Riens* to occupy the sixth side proves particularly felicitous. W.

VOCAL



Music of the 12th and 13th Centuries. (Sung in Latin, French, and German). Pro Musica Antiqua conducted by Safford Cape. 1-12" disc (*EMS-201) \$5.95.

Secular Music of Guillaume Dufay. (Sung in French). Pro Musica Antiqua conducted by Safford Cape. 1-12" disc (*EMS-206) \$5.95.

Secular Music of Josquin des Pres. (Sung in French). Pro Musica Antiqua conducted by Safford Cape. 1-12" disc (*EMS-213) \$5.95.

These three discs offer a veritable treasure trove of old music, authentically performed. They are the first of a series of such records being issued by EMS and eventually the others, now in preparation, will complete the series and form a comprehensive collection of Renaissance music.

Volume I is devoted to the music of the 12th and 13th centuries. Composers such as the famous troubadour Bernard de Ventadorn are represented along with such others as Adam de la Halle, Leonious, and Alfonso the Wise, King of Castile. The record features old instruments such as the lute, minstrel's harp, viols and recorders.

The second disc, identified as Volume VI is a selection of thirteen of the secular works of Guillaume Dufay (c. 1400-1474) the "most illustrious Cantor of the Lord Duke of Burgundy". As one expects of these Renaissance composers, they have a universality, an uncanny ability to write superbly in all forms. Included in this set are many instrumental pieces for such esoteric combinations as two treble recorders, tenor viol and minstrel's harp. Among the vocal items are lover's complaints and melancholy folk songs of a topical nature.

The third record, Volume XIII, is a collection of fourteen secular works by the great Josquin des Pres (c. 1450-1521) of whom, Martin Luther is said to have remarked "Josquin is master of the notes—they have to do as he wills. The other masters have to do as the notes will." The choice of material here follows the pattern set in the Dufay disc, songs interspersed with instrumental pieces.

Notes of a high level of distinction are supplied by the director of the enterprise, Safford Cape, and the complete texts, with intelligent translations are also given. These records will be indispensable for students of the period and are recommended for all those who would broaden their general musical background. W.

Ezio Pinza in Opera, Broadway, and Hollywood.

Ezio Pinza (basso) with various orchestral accompaniments. 4-7" discs in box (♂V-WDM-1655) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-157) \$4.67.

Unquestionably this group of recordings by Ezio Pinza is designed to show the various facets of this great singing-actor's art. Among the eight selections are two arias from Gounod's *Faust*, one aria

from *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart), and a group of songs including: *All the Things You Are*; *So in Love*; *One Song*; *Dancing in the Dark*; and *The Way You Look Tonight*. If you are particularly interested in Mr. Pinza, you'll probably go for this one.

Nebdal: Polenblut ("Polish Blood") (Complete operetta). (Sung in German). Rosl Seegers (soprano); Herbert Ernst Groh (tenor); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. Three sides, and **Lanner: (3) Waltzes**. Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-215) \$11.90.

As recording companies cast about for material, they certainly come up with some of the most unlikely "stuff" (the word is used advisedly and in lieu of certain less printable ones). Here is Urania recording and issuing an operetta called *Polenblut* written by Oskar Nebdal (1874-1930). It is extremely difficult to understand the purpose behind the release of this innocuous music. Is it for fanciers of Herbert Ernst Groh? Is it for the Czech (Nebdal was a Czech) colony in Iowa? Certainly it can't be for serious music lovers, for musically it falls well below Victor Herbert's efforts in this form.

The story is the usual one of the impecunious Baron who marries a wealthy girl to recoup his fortunes. There are waltzes, a *křakowiak* and sundry marches—the score is as light weight and banal as the book.

The odd side of the set is devoted to three waltzes by Josef Lanner: *Die Kasenden*, *Hofbaltänze* and the overture to *Alt-Wien*. Lanner may be remembered as a popular waltz composer of the early 19th century. It hardly seems decent to dig this music up.

The recording is fair but not up to Urania's usual high standards. It is sincerely to be hoped that, having gotten this out of their system, Urania will not burden the already cluttered LP catalogs with any more things like this! W.

Operetta Favorites (Vol. I). Max Lichtegg (tenor) with the Tonhalle Orchestra (Zurich) conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-51) \$5.95.

Songs from Lehar Operettas. Max Lichtegg (tenor) with the Tonhalle Orchestra (Zurich) conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-52) \$5.95.

Two "volumes" of arias or songs from popular operettas make their appearances this month. The soloist is Max Lichtegg, a Viennese tenor of modest resources. Herr Lichtegg is, one feels, being promoted as a second (this passion for successors!) Tauber. As such, he is bound to fail but, on the other hand, as a light tenor, singing romantic music, he is very plausible. His vocal equipment consists of a well-trained but not particularly sensuous voice, and his

musical endowment consists of a good sense of style and a flair for the type of music in which he specializes.

Volume I contains a varied collection of excerpts including works by Strauss (*Queen's Lace Handkerchief*, *Night in Venice* and *Fledermaus*); Lehar (*Count of Luxembourg*); Millöcker (*Bettstudent*); Offenbach (*Vert-Vert*); Suppé (*Boccaccio*); and Kalman (*The Dollar Princess*). Most of the selections are well known. The Strauss *morceaux* are prime favorites and it is a real pleasure to have the excerpts from *Vert-Vert* and *The Dollar Princess*.

The second disc is devoted to the work of Franz Lehar. The choice of material has been judiciously arranged. There are selections from *The Merry Widow*, *The Blue Mazurka*, *Gypsy Love*, *Paganini*, *Der Zarewitsch* and *Prinzessita*. Lehar's music has undeniable charm and some of his most ingratiating melodies from these world famous operettas have been included. It was Lehar's express desire to "capture the hearts of mankind and enter into their souls." By the time of his death, in 1948, Lehar knew by the tremendous successes his scores achieved that he had realized his fondest wish.

Both discs are reasonably well sung and should please all *afficionados* of the light opera form. London's recording and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra under Victor Reinshagen are both uniformly excellent. W.

Schönberg: Pierrot Lunaire. Erika Stiedry-Wagner (recitation) with a chamber group conducted by Arnold Schönberg. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4471) \$5.45.

Schönberg: Pierrot Lunaire. Ellen Adler (recitation) with a chamber group conducted by Rene Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*DIAL LP-16) \$5.95.

Since his death, Arnold Schönberg—one of the most controversial figures in modern music—has become a reputable member of music's Hall of Fame. One of his most striking works—*Pierrot Lunaire*—was recorded for the first time about a decade ago by Columbia and, being under his supervision, this release was considered authentic in every detail. It still is. In fact, Columbia has now made it available on a long-playing record where we feel that it benefits considerably. Although there are twenty-one pieces in this work, the mood of the entire group is a rather cumulative one and as a consequence the effect is greater in the transfer.

Dial has also offered a newly-recorded version with an able group of musicians. It does not, however, hold up on comparison with the earlier Columbia re-issue. Miss Ellen Adler, for one, cannot compete with Erika Stiedry-Wagner in the difficult *Sprechstimme* employed by Schönberg (in lieu of the conventional singing voice) for this composition. It is obvious that Miss Adler has not had the experience necessary to make the most of this unusual vocalization.

Pierrot Lunaire is a must for all collectors of

modern music. For more conventional music-lovers we suggest a cautious approach and a willing ear before adding it to the library. H.

Gershwin: Girl Crazy. Mary Martin (vocal) with supporting vocalists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 7-7" discs in box (øC-A-1022) \$8.55. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4475) \$5.45.

Columbia continues to issue, and with great success, new versions of musical shows of the past. As a matter of fact, their issuing of *Pal Joey* (TNR March '51) was a prophecy of things to come, for this musical of ten years ago is now enjoying a smash-revival on Broadway. Following Mary Martin's previous recordings of *The Bandwagon* and *Anything Goes*, Columbia offers this charming vocal-ist in a new presentation of Gershwin's *Girl Crazy*. The score of this show has provided, in the twenty-two years of its existence, three selections that have had a popularity outside the context of the musical itself. *I Got Rhythm*, *Embraceable You*, and *Bidin' My Time* can be heard almost any time, any place. Mary Martin and the supporting artists give an up-to-the-minute, sparkling account of one of the most vivacious musical shows of our time.

PIANO



Chopin: (12) Etudes, Op. 10. One and one-half sides, and **Chopin: (3) Nouvelles Etudes.** Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1132) \$5.95.

Chopin: (12) Etudes, Op. 25. One and one-half sides, and **Chopin: Variations Brillantes on "Je vends des scapulaires" by Hérold.** Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1133) \$5.95.

A Chopin Recital. Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4476) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Polonaise No. 1 in C-sharp minor, Op. 26, No. 1; Etude No. 6 in E-flat minor, Op. 10, No. 6; Etude No. 14 in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2 ("Les Abeilles"); Waltz No. 10 in B minor, Op. 69, No. 2; Berceuse in D-flat, Op. 57; Impromptu No. 1 in A-flat, Op. 29; Waltz No. 7 in C-sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2.*

It is great joy to have the twenty-four Etudes that make up Opus 10 and 25 recorded by Robert Goldsand, who so deeply impressed the musical world of our time with his six-concert cycle comprising the complete Chopin recital repertoire. This outstanding musical event occurred in 1949 under the auspices of the Chopin Centennial Committee. Concert Hall was very successful in recording Mr. Goldsand's renditions of these Etudes, and thus we have nothing but praise for these two LP discs.

Maryla Jonas' many admirers will doubtless be pleased to know that this fine artist has recorded a second "Chopin Recital" following her very successful 10-inch Columbia LP record (*C-ML-2004)

issued a number of months ago. If you liked the first "Chopin Recital," you will surely wish to hear the second.

First Piano Quartet on the Air. First Piano Quartet. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1624) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1227) \$5.72.

The First Piano Quartet has been a great favorite over the air since its first broadcast in 1941. During the long period from then to the present, this great ensemble has played any number of its own arrangements in the hundreds of radio programs it has given. For the present LP disc nine of the most noteworthy have been chosen. In other words this LP disc contains a forty-minute composite program *par excellence*.

The selections are: *Air with Variations* (Mozart); *Turkish March* (Mozart); "Trout" *Variations* (Schubert); *Träumerei* (Schumann); *Traumeswirren* (Schumann); *Liebestod* from Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde"; *Danse Macabre* (Saint-Saëns); *The Swan* (Saint-Saëns); and *Capriccio Espagnol* (Rimsky-Korsakov).

Stravinsky—arr. Babin: Petrouchka—Three movements. One side, and **Debussy: En blanc et noir.** Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4470) \$5.45.

Victor Babin has made an interesting and sparkling arrangement for two pianos of three movements from Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*. The three movements are: *Danse Russe*; *Chez Petrouchka*; and *La Semaine Grasse*. The two-piano arrangement is a natural, and as performed by the arranger and his partner, Vitya Vronsky, it is performance that will long be remembered. It is thrilling, to say the least. On the reverse of this LP disc you will find a superb rendition of Debussy's well-known suite for two pianos, *En Blanc et Noir*. Two-piano fans should go for this one in a big way.

Mozart: Sonata No. 12 in F, K. 332. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 17 in D, K. 576.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7040) \$5.95.

Whenever we hear Lili Kraus play Mozart we are always thrilled. When we see a new recording announced we are always impatient until we have an opportunity of hearing it. We are never disappointed. Thus we do not hesitate to recommend the LP disc listed above. The label indicates K. 576 as No. 18. This is of course an error; we have corrected it in our heading.

DICTION



Readings by Gertrude Stein. Gertrude Stein (reader). 1-12" disc (*DORIAN DR-331) \$5.45.

Whatever the world thinks, or will come to think, of Gertrude Stein and her antic style of writing, it will never be denied that her influence has been felt

throughout the world of literature.

It is again possible to hear the late Miss Stein read from her own works and thereby get a better conception of what she had to say. The selections here transferred to one long-playing disc were previously available only in a limited edition on shellac discs issued in 1935. The readings include excerpts from *The Making of Americans*; *A Valentine to Sherwood Anderson*; *If I Told Him (A Completed Portrait of Picasso)*; *Matisse*; and *Madame Recamier (An Opera)*.

Gertrude Stein's voice is a mellifluous one and we can see (or rather hear) how it was possible to fall completely under her spell and take what some persons consider to be the direct outgrowth of *Jabberwocky* in our stride.

MISCELLANEOUS



Music of India. Native musicians playing original musical score from the motion picture film, "The River." 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-5003) \$5.95.

Jean Renoir's production *The River*, a Technicolor movie made in India, has been enjoying a successful run of several months in New York, with a promise of showings in other cities in the near future. Polymusic presents portions of the original musical score from the sound track of this prize-winning motion picture and have accomplished a most interesting disc. It will not be necessary to see the film to enjoy the record, for it is a painless introduction to the exotic music of India. Although Polymusic states that the music is "representative," we found that the score was slightly tempered to the Western ear. This, however, is no drawback; we feel that in toning down the more "authentic" aspects of Indian music, the producers of this particular disc have created a wider audience for the music than would otherwise have been the case. The recording itself is superbly done with exquisite balance maintained throughout for the strange, yet beautiful, instrumental combinations.

How to Teach Your Dog to Obey. 1-10" unbreakable 78 rpm disc. \$1.95.

If you own a dog and would like to train him to obey simple commands, this record should be of help. On it Willy Necker, one of America's foremost dog authorities, gives some pertinent advice on the care of your dog and some simple instructions in training him to obey a number of basic commands. Mr. Necker was a lieutenant commander during World War II and was in charge of the U. S. Coast Guard War Dog Unit. He is said to have trained over 8,000 dogs of various breeds. He has appeared on several TV programs and at numerous exhibitions at Madison Square Garden. Mr. Necker should certainly know what he is talking about.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Collosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 83 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 g indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 3

MAY, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

TWO very unusual LP records came to our attention recently. They are products of Folkways Records (New York). The first, "Sounds of the Sea" (*X-121), was recorded by the Naval Research Laboratory and contains recordings of actual sounds of fish species both in isolated tanks and at sea at varying depths—from 5 feet in sheltered areas to 2,000 fathoms 200 miles from shore—in tropical waters of both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. One side of this unique disc contains recordings of segregated fish in isolated tanks—(5) catfish; (400) croakers; (150) snapping shrimp, etc. The reverse side contains recordings of ocean sounds at various depths at points different distances from the shores.

The second LP disc is entitled "Sounds of American Tropical Rain Forest" (*X-120). These recordings were made in the field by P. P. Kellogg and A. A. Allen of the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, and at the New York Zoo by Herbert Knobloch and Frederic Ramsey, Jr. They were made for the American Museum of Natural History and were used as sound effects for its Peruvian Rain Forest Exhibit which was held at the Museum in New York during November and December of last year. The first side of this disc contains sounds that may be heard during the "Dry Season"—birds, animals and insects; on the reverse side are similar sounds as heard during the "Rainy Season."

With each of these records is included a leaflet containing excellent notes. The price of these 12-inch LP discs is \$6.95 each—if your local dealer cannot supply them, orders sent to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

It occurs to us that some of our readers might be interested in knowing of the many unusual recordings that Folkways Records has

released, such as Drums of Haiti; Folk Music of Ethiopia; Music of South Arabia; Music of India; Calypso and Meringues; and Leadbelly's Legacy. If you are interested, just send us a postal card requesting a copy of the Folkways Records Catalog containing sixty or seventy such unique records. There is no charge for this catalog.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA

no - Scherchen to Mahler to Walter

Mahler: Symphony No. 8 in E ("Symphony of a Thousand"). (Sung in Latin and German). Elsa Maria Matheis, Daniza Ilitsch (sopranos); Rosette Anday, Georgine Milinkovic (altos); Erich Majkut (tenor); Georg Oegg (baritone); Hugo Weiner (basso); Franz Schutz (organ); the Vienna Kammerchor; the Singakademie; and the Sängerknaben; with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-164) \$12.11.

It was on 12 September 1908 that Gustav Mahler brought to a culmination the gigantic enterprise he referred to, with a shudder, as a "Barnum and Bailey show." That Mahler was, in Bruno Walter's words, "permitted to call out to the world with the voices of a mighty host of singers, this leitmotiv of his greatly agitated soul, that he was able to pronounce the message of life and faith while the seeds of death were already in his heart, was a thrill beyond anything he had ever experienced."

This enormous work has been recorded in its entirety by Columbia and no detail has been over-

looked. The services of one of the finest living conductors, Hermann Scherchen, and soloists of high calibre were obtained. The performance is a stirring one, technically competent and presented with all the fire and mysticism called for in the involved and, at times, demoniac score. The first part of the work is based on Hrabanus Maurus' hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*; the second portion is a musical interpretation of the final scene of *Faust*. Musically this grandiose symphony is not for all tastes. Mahler is a composer about whom many disputes have arisen, and it is very easy to find fault with him. But in spite of everything that may be said against him as an artist, this symphony remains a monumental effort, to be ranked among the very finest achievements of the 20th Century.

In closing this review, we would like to quote, for those interested in the occult, a story by Bruno Walter concerning the composition of the first part, that of the *Veni Creator Spiritus*. "He told me," writes Walter, "of a puzzling inspirational experience vouchsafed to him while the first movement was coming into being. When he had composed the first verses of the hymn in a burst of enthusiasm, he noticed that he did not have the rest of the verses. He sent a telegram to Vienna, but through some unfortunate circumstance did not receive a reply for a long time. Impatient and unable to restrain the flow of the musical inspiration caused by the first part, he continued to compose and had almost finished the symphonic form of the entire movement when the complete Latin text finally arrived. He was ready to start all over again, but found that it was not necessary. The words easily and faithfully conformed to the music, which a miraculous sense of visualization had enabled him to write." W.

Rossini—arr. Britten: *Soirées Musicales*. One side, and **Rossini**—arr. Britten: *Matinées Musicales*. Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden, London) conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-117) \$3.

Rossini—arr. Respighi: *Rossiniana*. Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hans Steinkopf. One side, and **Janáček**: *Sinfonietta for Orchestra*, Op. 60. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Vaclav Neumann. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7030) \$5.95.

Soirées Musicales is the first of Benjamin Britten's two orchestral suites of "movements after Rossini." The title is borrowed from a group of pieces included among the nearly three-hundred small scaled songs and piano sketches which Rossini turned out indolently during the last thirty, practically idle, years of his life. Britten selected five of the most likely of these musical bon-bons and wove them into a score to accompany "The Tocher," a trick film silhouette. Later the score was adapted to its present orchestral form and was produced as a ballet. *Matinées Musicales* is a product of Britten's extended visit to America in the early Forties. Approached to write

a ballet score for Balanchine, Britten dusted off his first Rossini suite, worked up this companion suite of five movements and tacked on a finale in the form of the overture to *La Cenerentola*. Despite the fact that three to five years separate them, these two suites are entirely of a piece in handling. Britten's respect for Rossini never becomes binding reverence. Although occasionally he cracks an out-and-out joke of his own, everything is in good taste, and the whole is cleverly woven with some deftly-applied modern harmonies. Braithwaite and the Covent Garden Orchestra perform this music with a becoming style, very neat and with fine touches; clear reproduction is an added feature. This is a fine disc whose modest price belies its quality.

Respighi, always fond of orchestrating the music of earlier Italians, built two enchanting ballet scores upon piano pieces from the same source tapped by Britten. *La Boutique Fantasque* has had three recent LP recordings, and is as lovely a score as one can imagine. Six years after devising this score, Respighi used some of the same material for his orchestral suite *Rossiniana*, drawing particularly on the collection of 24 "characteristic pieces" by Rossini. While not quite as quaint and piquant as *Boutique*, the present suite is certainly a charming concoction for easy listening. It is well played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra.

The Czech composer Janáček is represented in LP lists with five other works; we told about him in the review of *Taras Bulba* (TNR August 1951). The *Sinfonietta* was his last orchestral work, written in 1925 and 1926; it is in five short movements, each of which is scored for a different combination of instruments. It is a fine work, very appealing and songful, and is given a sterling performance here. Urania's brilliant reproduction is applied to both sides of this disc. S.

Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 364*. Walter Barylli (violin) and Paul Doktor (viola) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5107) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Les Petits Riens, K. 299b*. Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. One side, and **Mozart**: *Idomeneo, K. 367*—Ballet Music. Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Wilhelm Seegelken. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7250) \$5.95.

Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante, K. 364* is a work highly respected by Mozart scholars and true lovers of Mozart, although it is not too well known by the public at large. It is really a double concerto, stemming from the concerto grosso, and is considered the greatest work Mozart had composed up to that time—certainly the greatest concerto. Einstein claims that in this work "Mozart summed up what he had accomplished in the concertante portions of his serenades, adding what he had learned of the monumental style in Mannheim and Paris,

and, most important of all, treating all his materials with the personal and artistic maturity which he had by this time reached."

Walter Barylli plays Mozart with the smooth style and finish one would expect from a Viennese violinist—he has been concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra since 1938, and also founded the Barylli Quartet. Paul Doktor is another Viennese-trained musician who has concertised extensively in this country and received the highest praises of our critics. These two men play the *Sinfonia Concertante* with a unanimity that is almost incredible. Their rapport is just about perfect; this coupled with their beautiful style combines to make this as fine a performance of the work as you are likely to encounter. They are, of course, more than equal to any technical requirements of the work. Prohaska and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra provided an orchestral counterpart as great as the soloists contributions. Westminster's customary high fidelity reproduction relays this magnificent performance to the best advantage.

The disc containing two ballet suites from Mozart operas did not strike us as anything to get excited about. If you like this sort of thing you will find these performances of routinely good Continental calibre, a trifle mushy in reproduction. It may be greater music than we are indicating, maybe we're not in the mood at this listening, but it just did not register deeply. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 in E. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7190) \$11.90.

We are pleased to see the *Seventh* on LP, as it has always been our favorite Bruckner Symphony, possibly because it was the first one we learned to know. The *Seventh* has had a few recordings in years gone by, but none of them quite like the present one. This is a recorded concert performance of 1944 and a very fair recording it is, not marred by extraneous noises, and of acceptable fidelity. The Vienna Philharmonic was not enjoying its zenith of excellence in 1944, but it plays here with good tone and feeling—obviously dominated by an enchanted conductor who delights in Bruckner's broad sweeping grandeur, soaring spirit, thunderous fury, and mystical heights. Böhm takes the wonderful second movement *Adagio* at a mighty slow pace. It is marked "very solemn and slow" and is supposed to be paced very slowly; it is an homage to Wagner, whom Bruckner revered. Böhm takes this movement a bit too slow for our taste, but it preserves the dirge-like feeling which the composer wanted. Maybe we will get the feeling that the tempo is right after several hearings. Elsewhere in the symphony, Böhm achieves some splendid results, and throughout he evidences a great understanding of the work. He builds mighty climaxes in those sections which show Bruckner's thinking along heroic lines, and the Vienna Philharmonic is happily never guilty of loud

and noisy playing; their most stentorian voicings are always sweet.

If you like Bruckner, you will want to hear this recording. Nowhere is the performance finer than in the last movement, a not too fast section in rondo form. Hugo Wolf, one of Bruckner's staunchest supporters, found this finale a "hard nut to crack," but once broken, revealed a "sweet kernel inside." There is plenty of room reverberation in this recording and it is in the last movement that the resonance several times tends to blur the sound. Taken as a whole, it is an inspired performance, well played, and acceptably recorded. S.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 1 in D minor, Op. 13. Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10111) \$4.85.

The 22-year-old Rachmaninoff began work on his First Symphony in January of 1895 and completed the score on August 30th of the same year. The first performance took place on March 28, 1897, at St. Petersburg under the direction of Alexander Glazounov. The reading was so inadequate that Rachmaninoff later described the experience of the premiere as "the most agonizing hour of my life! Sometimes I stuck my fingers in my ears to prevent myself from hearing my own music, the discords of which absolutely tortured me." Cesar Cui's newspaper review was typical of the press reaction: "If there were a conservatory in hell, Rachmaninoff would get the first prize for his Symphony, so devilish are the discords he places before us."

Stunned and broken by his failure, Rachmaninoff fought a stern battle against mental depression, and with psychiatric help regained confidence in his creative ability and the famous Second Piano Concerto came into being. The ill-fated First Symphony, however, was not allowed to be played during the composer's lifetime. When Rachmaninoff left his native Russia in 1918, the manuscript score was left behind. It has not yet been found.

Nearly 50 years after its completion, the orchestral parts of the symphony were discovered in the archives of the Leningrad Conservatory. With these parts, supplemented by a draft of the composer's four-hand piano reduction and a manuscript of the first movement, a full score was reconstructed and performed with tremendous success in October of 1945 in Russia. The first American performance took place in March 1948 with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy.

Present day audiences will find it difficult to understand the failure this work first suffered, and there is little doubt it will quickly climb in popularity and find itself firmly beside the Second Symphony. It has boldness, enthusiasm, much lyric beauty, and dramatic impact. Anyone who likes the Second will at once like the First—it is a mature and full-blown work of art. Jacques Rachmilovich conducts with complete knowledge and devotion to

the score and the Stockholm Orchestra plays with dash and verve. The reproduction is excellent, making this a disc which carries our highest recommendation. S.

Weber: Euryanthe—Overture, and **Weber: Preciosa**—Overture. One side, and **Weber: Oberon**—Overture, and **Weber: Peter Schmolli und sein Nachbarn**. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-354) \$5.95.

Berlioz: Benvenuto Cellini—Overture, and **Berlioz: Le Corsaire**—Overture. One side, and **Ravel: Bolero**. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-466) \$5.95.

There seems to be a wide and continued demand for recordings of tuneful overtures and thus these two London LP discs should find a ready market awaiting them. Both the Vienna and the Paris orchestras give sterling performances and both have the benefit of the famous *ffrr* reproduction.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 7, Op. 60 ("Leningrad"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sergiu Celibidache. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-601) \$11.90.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 7, Op. 60 ("Leningrad"). Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 2-12" discs in album (*AL-ALG-3041) \$11.90.

This reviewer has disliked Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony* since the first time it was performed on an NBC broadcast. It is, in our opinion, a bombastic piece of trash from first bar to last. It may be a deft bit of symphonic construction, may have more musical worth in spots than we will credit, but its sum total is still overblown, overlong, and bombastic, politically-slanted tripe. We like most of Shostakovich's works, but this one is in a class by itself for being overbearing. You have probably read the program for this thing before. It deals with the great battle for Leningrad—was written in 1941 during the siege. It is a patriotic gesture, and again, we think that anyone who criticizes some of the romantic utterings of the composers who "wear their heart on their sleeve" have fertile territory in this fellow who depicts the battle so melodramatically.

The big fuss that Toscanini, Stokowski, Koussevitzky, and some others made for the right to give this work its American premiere was front-page newspaper fodder at the time. Toscanini got it on the air first; has he ever conducted it since? It is not a regular part of his repertoire. Stokowski performed it several times—once, at least, for soldiers at an army camp, and he cut the work down considerably—to about 45 minutes (an act of mercy indeed). The Urania discs are timed at about 78 minutes.

Of the two recordings now issued of the work, Steinberg's is probably the more intense and best

conceived interpretation. Celibidache is less hysterical, rather more compact in treatment, and has better reproduction than the Steinberg version. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1622) \$2.83. Coupled with **Haydn: Symphony No. 103 in E-flat** ("Drum Roll"). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1200) \$5.72.

Haydn: Symphony No. 103 in E-flat ("Drum Roll"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1621) \$2.83. Coupled with **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1200) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastorale"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5108) \$5.95.

The difference between nine symphonies and one hundred four symphonies as the span of Beethoven's and Haydn's careers was the difference of two centuries. Haydn completed his 104 with a dozen masterpieces of craftsmanship, fresh coloring, and invention. No other musician composed in quick succession so large a number of great symphonic masterpieces. Haydn accepted a commission for a dozen symphonies on his two visits to London in 1792 and 1794; the "Drum Roll" is the eleventh of this dozen and his last but one of his entire 104. The nickname is an identification stemming from the roll on the tympani, ushering in the slow introduction at the beginning of the work.

Beethoven's *First Symphony* appeared six years after the Haydn *Drum Roll* (1800 and 1794 respectively). They are interesting side by side because of their similarities, for Beethoven's first purely orchestral work was clearly under the spell of the older master. But they are still more interesting because of their differences: in one a century culminates with a music in full accord with its crystal clear and balanced aesthetic. The other lingers fondly in these ways, but in a hundred places foretells the more violent, the more eruptive style of the century to come. Charles Münch and the excellent Boston Orchestra perform both of these works with a becoming spirit and a polish that makes the playing alone a joy to hear. This fine playing coupled with the marvelous music in both works, well interpreted, makes this disc a worthwhile addition to any library. Some may prefer a smaller and lighter string tone in the Haydn symphony, but common practice these days, and common public acceptance—even preference, is for the full tone found on this disc. Competitive versions may be preferable in some cases, but the choice of couplings is largely a determining factor in this case.

Of the seven LP's now listed of the *Pastorale* our choice still remains Walter and the Philadelphia

Orchestra for beautiful playing and mellow interpretation. There is much to be said for the reissues of Weingartner and Toscanini. The new Scherchen disc has about the best sound but not the best orchestral playing; the reading is fair enough but not better than the others mentioned. Its sale will be on the merit of the reproduced sound rather than on interpretation. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4477) \$5.45.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4467) \$5.45.

Of the many recordings made of this magnificent work—half a dozen are now on LP—certainly none has ever contained more glorious orchestral playing than this one of the Brahms *First Symphony*. It is not the most relaxed type of playing, not in the sweet Viennese tradition, but of its kind it is playing of great power and conviction. There is a wealth of beautiful sonority, individual solo playing of the highest skill, and an ensemble that is nearly perfect. This type of playing should do much to champion the cause of using our great American orchestras for recording sessions rather than importing tapes that are often hastily contrived by groups of a calibre not comparable to our own.

Ormandy's readings of the Brahms symphonies have found high favor in many places far removed from Philadelphia, where they are also greatly admired. At times he gets an unusually thick sound, but most folks revel in this richness of the Philadelphia Orchestra. In Ormandy's defense we will say that in this performance he tampers with the score a lot less than most of the fellows, merely playing it for all it's worth—as written. Looking over the list of other versions we find Rodzinski, Stokowski, Keilberth, and the Weingartner re-issue making up a roster of solid merit. Each of these performances is good and we have heard them all with pleasure, but for sheer beauty of sound coupled with a good reading, Ormandy will undoubtedly outsell them all with this new disc.

Those who have heard Ormandy's *Fantastique* have been most enthusiastic in praise of it. Many had doubted that he could match Monteux, Paray, or Van Beinum in interpretation but now admit it is the equal of any of them. Again this disc outshines the others in the matter of orchestral performance, and particularly in the matter of reproduction. Columbia has come forth with its finest reproduced sound to date in this showpiece. There is a lot to be said for Monteux's reading and also for the Amsterdam Orchestra's playing (under Van Beinum); and we felt Paray had a strong feeling for the music in his version. But Columbia will carry off the honors in most cases with its entry, a strong one indeed. S.

Music of Antonio Vivaldi. Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9575) \$5.85

CONTENTS: *Concerto in A for strings and cembalo*; *Concerto in G minor for strings and cembalo*; *Concerto in D minor for viola d'amore, strings and cembalo*; *Concerto in G for strings and cembalo* ("Alla Rustica")

A Virtuosi de Roma Concert. Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9572) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 6 in F for strings* (Scarlatti); *Concerto in E for violin and strings* (Tartini); *Concerto in G for 'cello, strings and cembalo* (Vivaldi); *Sonata in G minor for strings, Op. 2, No. 6* (Albinoni).

American music lovers have been awaiting recordings by the Virtuosi di Roma, that musical organization which Toscanini calls "the great instrumental ensemble of this age."

The Virtuosi di Roma was founded by the Italian composer, pianist and musicologist, Renato Fasano. Fasano selected with great care leading instrumentalists from the various musical centers of Italy, and after a long period of discussion and rehearsal he presented his ensemble to the most critical audiences of Europe. Everywhere he was greeted with the highest acclaim. In the latter part of 1950 he brought the Virtuosi di Roma to the United States and their tremendous success in this country is a matter of common knowledge. Now that these recordings are available their fame will doubtless spread like wildfire, reaching numberless places that they have not and never will be able to visit.

Moussorgsky-Ravel: Pictures at an Exhibition. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50000) \$5.95.

Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta. One side, and Bloch: *Concerto Grosso for String Orchestra with Piano Obligato*. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50001) \$5.95.

The LP catalogs contain four versions of Moussorgsky's *Pictures* played by solo pianists, the form in which this work was originally written. The present recording is only the second to be issued on LP in an orchestral version, the other being the Rodzinski-New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-4033).

While Rodzinski's performance is a fine one, using the Ravel orchestration also, the matter of reproduction alone would make the present set more desirable. Rafael Kubelik gives an interesting account of the score, and one which should appeal to most music lovers and musicians. We have always been partial to Stokowski's orchestration (in parts) and to his interpretation. The very opening *Promenade* as done by Stokowski suggests a leisurely saunter through the aisles of a gallery, just the gait of a strolling

figure in a picture gallery. Kubelik sends the person through the gallery at a brisk trot—heaven knows what this fellow would have time to see at the pace he is traveling! It is a small thing, but a logical one, and we think too, that the music gains from breadth rather than haste. Elsewhere Kubelik is excellent, and the orchestra plays quite well.

Bartók's *Music for Strings and Percussion* has recently had two LP recordings, but the present set appealed to us as the most dynamic reading we have yet heard. Kubelik is at his very best in this work and exhibits a perfect feeling for the Bartók idiom. His handling of the finale is thrilling—dance rhythms and all the jazzy business going at full tilt, but under firm control. The more sombre Bloch work gets a fine-textured performance of beautiful quality and balance in its first LP version. This is one of Bloch's finest and most appealing compositions.

For these recordings, Mercury hangs a single Telefunken microphone 25 feet directly above the conductor's podium and records with Ampex tape recorders. The results are excellent, very lifelike, and with a great perspective. There is a real live presence to these recordings, as well as marvelous dynamic range and pleasing quality. S.

Tchaikovsky—trans Gould: *The Months, Op. 37a*. Morton Gould at the piano and conducting his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4487) \$5.45.

Morton Gould has done a first-rate job in transcribing Tchaikovsky's piano suite, *The Months*, for orchestra and solo piano. Mr. Gould directs his orchestra from the piano and presents a performance that is highly pleasing—those music lovers who like Tchaikovsky's ballet music, much of which has been successfully recorded, will certainly go for this item in a big way.

The Months is a suite of twelve short characteristic selections—one for each month in the year. Several of them are quite familiar: for example, *Autumn Song* (October), *Barcarolle* (June) and *Troika en traineau* (November).

Ibert: Escales ("Ports of Call"). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1628) \$2.83. Coupled with **Berlioz: Damnation of Faust**—Dance of the Sylphs and **Sibelius: The Swan of Tuonela** and **Granados: Goyescas**—Intermezzo. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-151) \$4.67.

Ibert's *Escales* is just the sort of piece that Stokowski can do extremely well—certainly better than any other conductor we can think of at the moment. This colorful suite depicting "ports of call" in a cruise of the Western Mediterranean is wildly exciting, and as performed by a fine orchestra under Stokowski's brilliant direction it makes a recording that will have a wide appeal. The other selections are well-known favorites—*The Swan of Tuonela* and *Goyescas* were dubbed from 78 rpm recordings that were made four or five years ago.

Stokowski Conducts Bach (Vol II). Leopold Stokowski and his Orchestra. 6-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1569) \$7.44. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1176) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Suite No. 2 in B minor; Easter Cantata—Chorale; Wir glauben all' an einem Gott; Komm' süßes Tod; Jesu, joy of man's desiring; Sheep may safely graze; Fugue in G minor ("Little Fugue").

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Prelude, Liebesnacht and Liebestod. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1567) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1174) \$5.72.

Leopold Stokowski is certainly a master at making recordings. Staid traditionalists may point fingers of scorn at him for the liberties they say he takes with the music of both Bach and Wagner but many thousands of music lovers are thrilled with his performances and back up their opinions with the dollars that they spend for his records. The two discs listed above will, in our opinion, reach the best sellers list immediately upon their release.

The Bix Beiderbecke Story (Vol I—Bix and his Gang). 1-12" disc (*C-GL-507) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: The Jazz Me Blues; Louisiana; Sorry; Thou Swell; Ol' Man River; Somebody Stole My Gal; Royal Garden Blues; At the Jazz Band Ball; Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down; Wa-Da-Da; Goose Pimples; Rhythm King.

The Bix Beiderbecke Story (Vol. II—Bix and Tram). 1-12" disc (*C-GL-508) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Singin' the Blues; Clarinet Marmalade; Way Down Yonder in New Orleans; Mississippi Mud; For No Reason at All in C; There'll Come a Time; I'm Comin' Virginia; Ostrich Walk; A Good Man is Hard to Find; Wringin' and Twistin'; Crying All Day; Riverboat Shuffle.

The Bix Beiderbecke Story (Vol. III—Whiteman Days). 1-12" disc (*C-GL-509) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Margie; In a Mist; Take Your Tomorrow; Borneo; Bless You! Sister; Baby, Won't You Please Come Home; Taint So, Honey, Taint So; That's My Weakness Now; Sweet Sue; China Boy; Because My Baby Don't Mean Maybe Now; Oh, Miss Hannah.

We felt that the above three discs were sufficiently worthy to list in these pages; all "Bix" fans are urged to investigate these fine re-issues, for they illustrate the many facets of this pioneer in "white" jazz. Incidentally, Bing Crosby may be heard warbling, 1928-style, on 'Taint So, Honey, 'Taint So.

CHORAL



Cherubini: Mass in C. (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Portsmouth Philharmonic Society. 1-12" disc (*PROGRAM EXLP-705) \$5.95.

Cherubini is an astonishing figure in the history of music. Although an Italian, he became director

of the Conservatoire and virtually dictated the policy of training young students from 1822 to 1842. Berlioz was among them and ran afoul of the dictatorial composer and has left us an amusing account of the episode in his *Memoirs*.

Cherubini's life span also serves to show us how relatively short the period of music, that is the music we hear most frequently, really is—when Cherubini was born (1760) Bach had been dead only ten years and when he died (1842) Tchaikovsky, if he were a normal child, had already cut his eyeteeth.

The music of this Mass, as was all Cherubini's music, was once held in high esteem; Beethoven and Mendelssohn were particularly lavish in their praise. Very little, if any of his large output has survived. The overture *Anacreon* used to be a concert favorite but is seldom heard today. The Mass in C, as recorded here, is an arid composition—formal and without any notable charm. In short the music is just like the man.

This performance by the Portsmouth Philharmonic adds nothing to the score. It is a routine job, a presentation that is in no way outstanding. The soloists are ordinary singers, the chorus and orchestra seem well trained but remain second rate. The recording itself is a lack-lustre affair and perfunctory notes have been supplied. Inflation as to price and deflation as to quality have set in with a vengeance when such a disc is priced at \$5.95—there are many single 78 RPM records at \$1.32 that offer much more, both musically and artistically. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 140 ("Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 4** ("Christ lag in Todesbanden"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Bach Guild Choir and Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-511) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 140 ("Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 32** ("Liebster Jesu mein Verlangen"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Akademiechor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5122) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 32 ("Liebster Jesu mein Verlangen"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 57** ("Selig ist der Mann"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Pro Musica Chorus and Orchestra, Stuttgart, conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VOX-PL-7340) \$5.95.

Bach *Cantatas* are being issued apace and now duplication is beginning to set in. Duplications, as most record collectors know, are a mixed blessing. In the case of *Cantata No. 140* "Wachet auf" the two recorded here are not difficult to choose between, but the reverse side of each disc is different, thus introducing complications. The Bach Guild recording has the best coupling, but the Westminster is

far and away the best performance. Scherchen, Poell and Lazlo combine forces and come up with a thrilling performance of this, one of Bach's most inspired works. There is a majesty and heroic quality about their presentation that beggars description. The Bach Guild performance of the same work, under Prohaska, while a very fine one, is overshadowed. *Cantata No. 4* "Christ lag in Todesbanden" as performed by the same group for the Bach Guild, is the best performance of this moving and eloquent work, quite superior to the Decca version (TNR Apr. '52) and the earlier Shaw recording for Victor. The obverse side of the Westminster is another superb performance, this time of *Cantata No. 32* "Liebster Jesu mein Verlangen" by the same artists who do the "Wachet auf." To add to the general confusion, Vox issues a duplication of *Cantata No. 32* along with a first recording of *Cantata No. 57* "Selig ist der Mann." Both works are well sung, the No. 32 not so well as on Westminster.

It is a sort of Hobson's choice with which one is confronted insofar as making a selection is concerned. Certainly, if only one disc is to be bought it should be the Westminster. However, the Bach Guild "Christ lag in Todesbanden" is well worth owning.

The recording ranges from the very best (Westminster) through the Bach Guild (a very close second) to the Vox, also a very acceptable job. Texts are furnished in all cases—no particular notes on the Vox, very good ones on the other two. W.

Shostakovich: Song of the Forests, Op. 81. (Sung in Russian.) O. Petrov (tenor) and M. Kilichevsky (basso) with the Combined Chorus and State Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. conducted by Eugene Mravinsky. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-422) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Song of the Forests, Op. 81. (Sung in Russian.) O. Petrov (tenor) and M. Kilichevsky (basso) with the Combined Choruses and Orchestras of the National Philharmonic and the Bolshoi Theatre. 1-12" disc (*COLOSSEUM CRLP-118) \$5.45.

These two recordings are of unusual interest—the interest, however, is not of a musical nature.

To begin with, Dimitri Shostakovich has written some more music "by the yard"—that is, music that has either been commissioned by the State or written as a means of ingriating himself with the authorities. Either motive is a poor one. Political music, from Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory* on down to this present effusion, has been notable for its banality and mediocrity. The soloists in this performance (notice that they are the same on both discs) are really excellent. Petrov is a top-flight tenor with a big voice and Kilichevsky is a typical Russian bass. Eugene Mravinsky is reputed to be one of the Soviet Union's foremost conductors. They are all worthy of better material, for somehow, despite all the forces unleashed upon it, this music seems shallow and pretentious. It is reported to be Shostakovich's

first major effort since his severe censure by the Soviet music critics. It is to be doubted whether the present work could have been criticized too severely because of its political flavor. Perhaps Shostakovich had something in mind like the late George M. Cohan's sure-fire method for getting applause.

The real interest of the two discs lies in the difference in the quality of the recorded sound. This reviewer firmly believes that both records were made from the same tape (notwithstanding Vanguard's claims to have the sole rights, etc.) except that in the case of the Vanguard disc, considerable ingenuity was exercised to improve the quality. The Colosseum record is muddy and of very poor quality. The differences, lying in technical procedure, are both interesting and informative. W.

Schütz: Musicalische Exequien ("German Requiem"). (Sung in German). The Cantata Singers with John Beaver (organ) and Alfred Mann (bass viol) conducted by Arthur Mendel. 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-9) \$5.95.

This is one of the really worth while LP discs. The music of Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) has long been considered great but opportunities for hearing any of it were rare. The advent of LP has remedied this lack to some extent and now, with this superb recording of one of the old master's large works, it is possible for the average music lover to judge for himself and understand the many encomiums that heretofore had to be taken on faith.

Schütz was, to begin with, the first composer to develop a genuinely personal (in his case Teutonic) style. The most striking characteristic of his art lies in its expressive depth, a kind wholly new to music. In this music every means of securing musical interest is sacrificed to expressive purposes, with the result, as one writer points out, that "... he (Schütz) attains to a stark, elemental simplicity and a mystical grandeur that are quite unlike anything else, and are among the most affecting things in all music."

The work recorded here is all that the above claims. It was written in 1636 on the occasion of the death of Prince Heinrich the Younger, of Heuss. There are three sections, first the *concerto* or *German Requiem Mass* ("Naked came I out of my mother's womb"), the second *Motet* ("Lord, if I but Thee may have") and lastly the *Song of Simon* ("Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace"). Each section is superbly sung by an excellent group of singers and accompanied by organ and bass viol. The work was recorded in St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University.

Dr. Arthur Mendel, who conducts the *Mass* with loving care, has made a scholarly arrangement of the work that does no violence to its medieval character. Schütz's own notes on the performance have been printed on the jacket along with the complete text and a new translation by Mr. Henry S. Drinker.

It is a wonderful treat to have this magnificent

music available in such a faithful performance and recording. All serious music lovers are urged to investigate it. W.

Haydn: Missa Solemnis in B-flat ("Harmoniemesse"). (Sung in Latin). Soloists with Chorus and Orchestra of the Danish National Symphony conducted by Alex Larsen. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-541) \$5.95.

Since the Haydn Society relaxed its activities in the past six or eight months, new works by this genial composer have been few. The present record is the first recorded performance of the *Harmoniemesse*. One recalls the earlier 78 rpm recording by the Haydn Society (TNR Oct. '49) in limited edition, now out of print.

The *Mass in B Flat*, the last of Haydn's sixteen works in this form, was written in 1802, after the composer's final return from England. It is an ambitious work, large in conception and looks forward to the Beethoven style. The sub-title *Harmoniemesse* is, in all probability, justified by the manner in which the wind instruments are used.

This performance is not a great one. All the notes are here, they are accurately sung, but there is no real spirit, none of the joy of singing that would raise it above the routine. The soloists are ordinary, Ilse Katschinka is the best of an average group. Margarita Kemp, the alto, and Hans Loeffler and Keith Eugen, the tenor and bass respectively, are adequate, no more. The orchestra and chorus under Alex Larson move through the work in a lifeless manner. It is difficult to place a finger on what is lacking. The performance is dull where it should sparkle, heavy where it should be spirited. The recording is neither good nor bad—it too descends to a mediocre level and remains there. Those who are interested in collecting Haydn's *Masses* are advised to proceed with caution. Hear it by all means before buying. There is enough on this disc to make one hope for a better performance, one that will do justice to Haydn's great conception. W.

Brahms: Schicksalslied, Op. 54. Stanford University Chorus with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1637) \$2.83. Coupled with **Bach**—trans. Respighi: **Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.** 1-10" disc (*V-LM-149) \$4.67.

Bach—trans. Respighi: **Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.** San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. One side, and **Brahms: Schicksalslied, Op. 54.** Stanford University Chorus with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-149) \$4.67.

We cannot get very enthusiastic about this one. The famous Bach selection is fair enough but we rather prefer the Ormandy-Philadelphia Orchestra

version. As for the Brahms *Schicksalslied*, we hope some day to get a fine German recording of this important work with the text of the choral part in its original language. On the envelope of the present disc a translation of the text in English is given but do not try to match this up with what is sung by the Stanford University Chorus. This group uses another translation entirely. The gentleman who wrote the notes certainly never heard the recording.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Fauré: Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 15. Gaby Casadesus (piano); Daniel Guilet (violin); William Schoen (viola); David Soyer (violoncello). One side, and **Fauré: Sonata No. 2 in G minor for 'Cello and Piano, Op. 117.** David Soyer (violoncello) and Leopold Mittman (piano). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1007) \$5.95.

Fauré: Quartet in E minor, Op. 121. Guilet Quartet. One side, and **Fauré: Sonata No. 2 in E minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 108.** Daniel Guilet (violin) and Gaby Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1008) \$5.95.

Fauré: Trio in D minor, Op. 120. One side, and **Ravel: Trio in A minor.** Albeneri Trio. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10089) \$4.85.

It is interesting to note that the great French composer and teacher, Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924), who numbered among his many outstanding pupils, Maurice Ravel, Nadia Boulanger and Georges Enesco, is gradually coming into his own in this country. More and more of his music is being heard in concert halls and many of his compositions are appearing in recorded form. Five of his important chamber works are listed above performed by fine artists and recorded with excellent fidelity. Lack of space does not permit us to go into detail, but we urge those music lovers who are interested to investigate these fine recordings.

Ravel: Quaret in F. Pascal String Quartet. One side, and **Ravel: Sonata for Violin and 'Cello.** Oscar Shumsky (violin) and Bernard Greenhouse (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1123) \$5.95.

Ravel: Sonata for Violin and 'Cello. Bela Urban (violin) and Marcel Hubert (violoncello). One side, and **Milhaud: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano and Debussy: Il pleure dans mon coeur.** Bela Urban (violin) and Virginia Urban (piano). And **Ibert: Le Jardinier de Samos—Prelude (Act II).** Bela Urban (violin) and Marcel Hubert (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*CLASSIC CE-1005) \$5.95.

This pair of LP records contain a wealth of French chamber music of the present century. They will not have an appeal to music lovers generally, but for those who are interested they will be very attractive. The artists represented are of high caliber

and the reproduction has been faithfully accomplished.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 16 in F, Op. 135. One side, and **Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133** ("Great Fugue"). Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1212) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133 ("Great Fugue"). One side, and **Purcell: Chaconne in G minor** ("London") and **Purcell: (3) Three Part Fantasias.** Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-419) \$5.95.

Of prime interest on these two discs is the opportunity of hearing Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, which was originally the finale of his String Quartet, Opus 130, played first by the Pascal Quartet as it was originally conceived and then as many Beethoven scholars feel that it should be played by a string orchestra. Weingartner has said that the grandeur of this work requires more than four string instruments. With these two discs available one may listen to both and make his own choice.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in F, K. 37. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, K. 39.** Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1119) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 6 in B-flat, K. 238. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 8 in C, K. 246.** Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1120) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491. Lili Kraus (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 15 in C, K. 545.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6880) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537 ("Coronation"). Lili Kraus (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Adagio in B minor, K. 540.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7300) \$5.95.

In grouping the four LP discs listed above, we did so only to save space. We hope that our readers will not think that the reason was that they lack importance. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The first two Concert Hall records contain four Mozart concertos, only one of which, the No. 1, has been recorded previously as far as we could learn. Nos. 1 and 2 are Mozart's earliest efforts in this form and were written when the composer was but a boy of eleven. True, the thematic material was drawn from sonatas by Honauer and Raupach, yet

the music itself is purely Mozartean. They are little gems well worth the thoughtful consideration of all discerning music lovers. No. 6 appeared nine years later and No. 8 six years after No. 6. These latter two are more mature and clearly indicate what was to come in the more profound works that were to follow. All four of these concertos, so beautifully played by Artur Balsam, are key pieces in the mosaic of Mozart's musical development as depicted by his twenty-five works in this form (twenty-seven if you add the one for two pianos and the one for three pianos).

While the two later concertos to be found on the third and fourth discs in the group listed above have been recorded before and are presently available in LP versions, it is a great joy to have them played by such an outstanding artist as Lili Kraus. Mme. Kraus, in our opinion, has never given a poor recorded performance, and her Mozart interpretations are "pearls of great price."

OPERA



Bizet: Les Pêcheurs de Perles ("The Pearlfishers"). (Sung in French). Mattiwilda Dobbs (soprano); Enzo Seri (tenor); Jean Borthayre (baritone); Lucien Mans (basso); with the Paris Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 3-12" discs in album (*REN-SX-205) \$18.50.

Every once in a while there is made available on LP records, and invariably in an European performance, an opera that is known to the majority of music lovers by name only. Performances of such a work in this country are usually denied us for several reasons, some of which are very cogent—expense, for one. Such a work is Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*. It was first produced in 1863 and had a cool reception. The Metropolitan presented a truncated two-act version in 1896 with Calvé, Cremonini, Ancona and de Reske. It did not please. The opera was revived in 1916 with Hempel, Caruso, de Luca and Rothier and this performance also failed to impress (which is difficult to understand), and it has not been heard there since. Two performances by the old Philadelphia Grand Opera Company in the early Thirties featured John Charles Thomas and Nino Martini.

The recording and performance here are excellent. The cast, with the exception of the tenor (who suffers from either faulty method or lack of voice, maybe both), is very good. The role of the priestess Léila is sung by Mattiwilda Dobbs, who displays a fine coloratura and the rare ability—rare at least in this day and age—to produce a real trill. Zurga, in the person of Jean Barthayre, is very convincing. He has a fine resonant baritone in addition to being a musician. The relatively minor role of Nourabad is capably sung by Lucien Mans. Enzo Seri, as Nadir, is not (as previously mentioned) too successful, al-

though his performance can by no means be considered a failure. His chief difficulty is with his top notes that sometimes are off key and on other occasions are faultily produced, lending them a strained, colorless character. Below a G, however, his voice steadies and takes on a more pleasing quality.

Musically the score is a young man's and derivative, being based largely on Gounod and to a lesser extent on Berlioz. (The youthful Bizet could have chosen worse!) There are moments of real passion and grandeur in the score, although none of the characters can be said to really come alive. René Leibowitz and his musicians play superlatively well and Renaissance supplies first-rate recording.

The set is recommended for all opera lovers as well as those interested in French music. It is a real treat and good, if not great, music. W.

Verdi: Otello (complete). (Sung in Italian). Anna la Pollo (soprano); Ada Landi (mezzo-soprano); Gino Sarri (tenor); Antonio Manca Serra (baritone); with the Rome Opera House Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alberto Paoletti. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-216) \$17.85.

Great Scenes from Verdi's "Otello." (Sung in Italian). Eleanor Steber (soprano); Ramon Vinay (tenor); Frank Guarrera (baritone); with the Metropolitan Opera Association Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4499) \$5.45.

Otello, that amazing product of the 73 year old Verdi, is beyond a doubt one of the greatest operas of all time. It is probably one of the most difficult to cast, especially in the name part. In fact the great Otellos could be counted on the fingers of one hand—Tamagno (who created the role), Slézak, Zena-tello, and lastly, one of the very greatest, Giovanni Martinelli. Almost as taxing vocally and equally demanding from an histrionic viewpoint, is the role of Iago. Outstanding interpreters of this part are equally scarce; Maurel (of the original performance), Sammarco, del Puente and Granforte.

Urania's complete recording is a mixed blessing. It is wonderful to have the music in a modern recording. The cast is, unfortunately, only mediocre. Gino Sarri, in the title role, is beyond his depth both musically and dramatically. He is obviously sincere in his effort, but it misses fire due to his plain inability to project the character with any degree of realism. His voice is too light for the part, and he strains for most of his top notes. Antonio Manca Sarra, the Iago, is also a *routinier*. The *Credo* comes off fairly well (it usually does) and his part in the ensemble numbers is well handled. Desdemona, in the person of Anna la Pollo, is acceptable—it is a rather colorless role in comparison with the other two but she still manages to sing with some expression and color. The minor roles are cast with varying degrees of success.

Columbia's effort embraces the *Love Duet* from the first act, the *Credo*, the *Finale* to Act 2, the

Duet and *Monolog* at the beginning of Act 3, the *Willow Song* and *Ave Maria* and, of course, the *Death Scene*. Vinay is the current Otello at the Metropolitan, and while he seems to strain less than usual on these records, his singing is not notable for beauty of tone. He tries, however, and is convincing dramatically if not vocally. Steber's Desdemona has been much admired in certain quarters and this reviewer approached her performance with some doubts. The doubts were resolved quite early—Miss Steber gives perhaps her best performance to date on records. Guarrera is mis-cast as Iago. His voice is too light for all the music except the *Era la notte*, which he sings nicely.

The recording in the Urania set is shrill, lending a certain brilliance to the orchestral passages but not adding much to the voices that sound hard and brittle. Columbia's recording on the other hand is very good indeed, the orchestra especially sounding magnificent. W.

Dramatic Scenes from Russian and French Operas.

(Sung in Russian and French). George London (bass-baritone) and Rosalind Nadell (mezzo-soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Association Orchestra conducted by Kurt Adler and Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4489) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Prince Igor*—No sleep, no rest (Borodin); *The Demon*—Do not weep, my child (Rubinstein); *Don Quichotte*—Mort de Don Quichotte (Massenet); *Patrie*—Pauvre martyr obscur (Paladilhe)

The young Canadian-born bass-baritone, George London, has chosen unhackneyed material for his first domestic recording. He has also undertaken to invoke the ghost of Chaliapin, not so much vocally (his voice is too light) as artistically, by programming music from *Prince Igor* and, more particularly, the finale from Massenet's *Don Quichotte*.

Mr. London is a polished singer, there can be no doubt of that. His vocal equipment consists of a big baritone voice of exceptional beauty and power—hence he is identified as a bass-baritone. The necessary ability to color a phrase and the various technicalities of voice production are in evidence; he sings easily and with understanding.

The opening selection, the second act aria from *Prince Igor* is sumptuously sung. The unfamiliar Russian language offers no apparent difficulties. Mr. London sings knowingly and with expression. Likewise the famous aria from Rubenstein's *The Demon* is sung in its original tongue and it, like the preceding piece, is a noteworthy achievement.

The finale to *Don Quichotte* is a little harder to classify. Like Chaliapin, London sings both characters, Sancho and the Don. This is, artistically speaking, a questionable thing to do; for no matter how well a singer alters his manner and expression, he is still the same person. It does violence to Massenet's conception of the music, and the only pur-

pose served, to put it bluntly, is to bolster the artist's ego—a very poor reason indeed. George London shouldn't need anything of this nature. The enterprise is moderately successful. The last selection is new to records. It is the closing scene from Emile Paladilhe's forgotten opera *Patrie* (*Fatherland*). The story is concerned with the Spanish occupation of Holland in the time of Phillip II. The music is undistinguished, but the aria is expressively sung.

Adequate accompaniments are supplied by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under Kurt Adler for the Russian arias and Jean Paul Morel for the French. Good recording, poor notes, no texts! W.

Puccini: La Bohème. (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese, Anne McKnight (sopranos); Jan Peerce (tenor); Francesco Valentino, George Cehanovsky (baritones); Nicola Moscona, Salvatore Baccaloni (bassos); with chorus and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6006) \$11.44.

This is the third complete *La Bohème* to become available on LP records and, in addition, will probably be the most widely publicized. The performance is that of February 3rd and 10th, 1946, two broadcasts that were widely acclaimed.

It must be stated at the outset that despite all the incense burned about Toscanini, this performance is not nearly as good as the London recording (TNR Feb. '52). The singers, recording and direction are all on a lower artistic level in this present set. Jan Peerce, as Rodolfo, sings with all his wonted fervor and musicianship, but he does not have the necessary vocal equipment to be a lyric tenor. Licia Albanese is a fine soprano, but her voice is overly large for Mimi. Valentino and Moscona, while able singers, are not really first-rate. The only outstanding singer is Salvatore Baccaloni, who undertakes the two minor roles of Benoit and Alcindoro. Mr. Toscanini drives the NBC Orchestra in his accustomed fashion, tightening up the score to the point where one expects it to go "BOING!" in several places.

And another thing—the matter of Toscanini's humming. If any other conductor did this a scream would go up that could be heard for blocks! Naturally, any conductor worth his salt is going to get absorbed in the music and, perhaps, sing along with the orchestra; but please, not on records.

There will be many who will want Toscanini's performance of this favorite. For those it is only necessary to say, "here it is." For others, interested in a fine recording and a superlative performance of Puccini's matchless score there exists the London set (*L-LLP-462/3)—the superior of this present performance from every angle. The Columbia recording, featuring better singers than the Victor release, has many adherents but does not have quite the over-all artistry of either of the two other sets. W.

VOCAL



Mahler: Das Klagende Lied. (Sung in German). Ilona Steingruber (soprano); Sieglinde Wagner (contralto); Ernst Majkut (tenor); with the Vienna Kammerchor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10102) \$4.85.

Mahler: Des Knaben Wunderhorn (Early songs) and **Mahler: Rückert Lieder.** (Sung in German). Anny Felbermayer (soprano) and Alfred Poell (bass-baritone) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-421) \$5.95.

Mahler: Rückert Lieder. (Sung in German). Ilona Steingruber (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. One side, and **Mahler: Kindertotenlieder.** (Sung in German). Vera Rosza (contralto) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10103) \$4.85.

That the advent of tape recording and the long playing record has made profound changes in the recorded repertoire goes without saying. One aspect of the tremendous activity has been the issuance of numerous recordings of Mahler's music. Some of this is due to geographical circumstance. If 70% of all recording is done in Central Europe, you are going to get Mahler, make no mistake about it. The three discs noted above are devoted to this strange man's music and all are concerned with his better side, artistically speaking. Mahler, the architect of the large symphonies was one man; Mahler the lyricist, the song writer is quite a different and, for this reviewer a far superior, composer.

Das Klagende Lied is an early work, first written at the age of 20; it was originally intended to be an opera but was completed in the form of a dramatic cantata. It was revised eight years later, in 1898 and first performed in 1901. The story is a gruesome one, similar in nature to that of Dvořák's *Golden Spinning Wheel*. It is, essentially, taken from the Grimm's tale of *The Singing Bone*. The performance here is good, well sung and played with care and understanding. Mmes. Steingruber and Wagner are in fine voice and M. Majkut is in good form. As an early work of the composer's it is of commanding interest, both musically and as an example of his gifts of orchestration.

The two remaining discs are devoted to *lieder*. The *Rückert Lieder* appear on both records and offer food for thought because of the very different presentation. Vanguard has interspersed the *Rückert Lieder* with early songs from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a circumstance that relieves the similarity of mood and style of the former. In addition, they have acquired the services of two superb singers, Felbermayer and Poell. It is an extremely worth while disc. On the Mercury recording the *Rückert Lieder*

are sung by Ilona Steingruber quite acceptably, but the use of two different voices plus the unique arrangement on the Vanguard recording make the latter preferable. *The Kindertotenlieder*, in its fourth recorded performance, is overshadowed by Marion Anderson's recording for Victor and Kathleen Ferrier's for Columbia.

The recording of all three discs is good as are the notes, Vanguard having a slight edge in both departments. W.

Sacred Arias by the Great Masters. (Sung in English). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4521) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *The Creation*—With Verdure Clad (Haydn); *Elijah*—Hear Ye, Israel! (Mendelssohn); *Cantata No. 68*—My Heart Ever Faithful (Bach); *Cantata No. 21*—Sighing, Weeping (Bach); *The Messiah*—I Know that My Redeemer Liveth (Handel).

Buxtehude: (5) Solo Cantatas for Soprano. (Sung in German and Latin). Margot Guillaume (soprano) with the instrumental ensemble of the Bach Anniversary (Hamburg) conducted by Marie-Luise Bechert. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7330) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Schaffe in mir, Gott, ein rein' Herz;* *O clemens, o mitis, o coelestis Pater;* *Herr, wenn ich nur Dich hab';* *Ich sprach in meinem Herzen;* *Also hat Gott die Welt geliebet.*

The two records listed above offer an interesting contrast, both musically and artistically. In addition, the different policies of the two record companies are highlighted very clearly.

Miss Steber is presented in three well-known oratorio arias and two selections from Bach Cantatas. All are sung in English. They are sung well but with a minimum of expression. It is a great pity that more time and trouble could not have been spent to raise this record above the level of mediocrity. Eleanor Steber is capable of better work—her recent *Otello* disc proves this and one can only surmise that all parties to the recording session—soloist, orchestra, conductor and artistic director (save the mark!)—were disinterested. Such a waste of talent is depressing.

The Vox recording, on the other hand, is a little gem and the forces employed are modest in the extreme. Margot Guillaume is a soprano of moderate gifts. Vocally she has none of the sumptuousness of Steber. But how she uses her limited gifts! One is reminded of the parable of the talents. Mlle. Guillaume has complete command of her material which, incidentally, does not make excessive technical demands on her voice and her sense of style is perfect. Her singing can be described as tasteful. The music will be new to most collectors and is of paramount interest. The five *Cantatas* are based on Biblical texts and range from Old Testament settings (por-

tions of the 51st and 73rd Psalms and Ecclesiastes) to New Testament verses (part of the parable of the Prodigal Son and the famous John 3:16). The accompaniments are furnished by a small instrumental ensemble. They are in excellent taste and make use of old instruments such as *violas da gamba* and *violettas*.

The recording in both discs is good. The notes on the Columbia jacket are perfunctory. The Vox package includes an intelligent discussion of Buxtehude and supplies the texts of the cantatas. W.

Rodgers: Babes in Arms. Mary Martin (vocal) with supporting vocalists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 6-7" discs in box (øC-A-1024) \$7.40. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4488) \$5.45.

As a follow-up to last month's successful "Girl Crazy" Columbia presents Mary Martin in another revival of more than passing interest. The Rodgers and Hart musical "Babes in Arms," one of the high spots of the 1937-38 Broadway season, gains new life in this Goddard Lieberson production. Among the many bright, engaging tunes to be heard on this disc are the ever-new *Where or When*; *My Funny Valentine*; *Johnny One Note*; and *The Lady is a Tramp*. In addition there are six other songs all presented in first-rate style. Mary Martin is undoubtedly one of the First Ladies when it comes to song-styling, and each new release maintains the standard she has set for herself in giving the listening public something in the popular vein that has more than the usual evanescent appeal attached to such ventures.

A Lauritz Melchior Recital. Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with the MGM Studio Orchestra conducted by Giacomo Spadoni and George Stoll. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-109) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Emperor Waltz* (Strauss); *The Kiss in Your Eyes* (Heuberger); *Lenz* (Hildach); *You Are My Heart's Delight* (Lehar); *Tosca*—E lucevan le stelle; *Tosca*—Recondita armonia; *Pagliacci*—Vesti la giubba; *Pagliacci*—No, pagliaccio non son!

This one will be a surprise! Whether it will be a pleasant one or not will depend on whether you will find it attractive to have one of the world's greatest Wagnerian tenors sing four well-known Italian operatic arias and four Continental popular songs. We had the impression that Mr. Melchior hadn't changed his costume and was still in the role of Siegfried when he came to the studio to make these recordings. The whole thing seems pretty incongruous to us. His movie fans may like it, but we rather believe that his operatic admirers will feel very much as we do.

Spanish Folk Songs (Vol. II). Victoria de Los Angeles (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1635) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-131) \$4.67.

The success of Miss Angeles' first LP record

(*V-LM-63), containing a group of Spanish folk songs culled from several provinces of her native land, probably prompted this second disc. The present record contains an even dozen songs by Spanish composers of the present century. The composers represented are Falla, Granados and Guridi. We feel sure that persons interested in present-day Spanish songs will find this disc quite attractive.

Grace Moore Sings. Grace Moore (soprano) with orchestras conducted by Josef Pasternack, Alexander Smallens and Victor Young. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9593) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Madama Butterfly*—Un bel di, vedremo; *La Tosca*—Vissi d'arte; Schubert's *Ständchen*; *Love Me Forever*; *What Shall Remain*; *The End Begins*; *Stars in My Eyes*; *Learn How to Lose*; *Our Song*; *The Whistling Boy*.

Judging by the calls that dealers continually receive for recordings by Grace Moore, the American public has not forgotten this exciting artist, whose rise from a choir singer in her native Tennessee via musical comedy to stardom at the Metropolitan opera is a success story without equal. . . . Decca has selected a group of recordings which show the marked versatility of this magnetic singer for the LP disc listed above.

Songs of Rudyard Kipling. Leonard Warren (baritone) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1630) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-147) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Boots* (McCall); *Gunga Din* (Spross); *Recessional* (DeKoven); *Danny Deever* (Damrosch); *Rolling Down to Rio* (German); *Mother o' Mine* (Tours); *Smugglers' Song* (Kernochan); *On the Road to Mandalay* (Speaks).

Leonard Warren was an excellent choice for the recording of these masculine songs of Rudyard Kipling. Those persons to whom they appeal will surely be highly pleased with Mr. Warren's renditions.

A Moussorgsky Song Recital. (Sung in Russian).

Vladimir Rosing (tenor) accompanied by Myers Foggin (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9577) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Yeremoushka's Cradle Song*; *Gopak*; *The Star*; *To the Dnieper*; *Reverie of the Young Peasant*; *The Orphan*; *Mushrooms*; *Trepak*; *Death's Lullaby*; *Death's Serenade*; *Field Marshal Death*; *The Goat*; *Ballade*; *Savishna*.

The songs of Moussorgsky number between forty and fifty, but despite the comparative smallness of the output they offer a great variety of emotion and experience. The fourteen songs here recorded have been selected judiciously, with an eye to contrast and comprehensiveness.

Contrast there is, although there is a typically Russian morbidity running through all Moussorgsky's work. In such a song as *Ballade*, that describes a crow drinking a dead man's blood and plucking out

his eyes, while his wife and child await his return from battle, the text is almost too gruesome to be considered musical material. Yet such is Moussorgsky's genius that it is able to raise this horrible situation to a universal plane and the listener gets some idea of solitude, the inevitability of Death and the horror of War. The same poet, Count Golennechtchev-Koutousov, also supplied texts for the impressive *Songs and Dances of Death* (*Trepak; Death's Lullaby; Death's Serenade and Field Marshal Death*). This was Moussorgsky's first song-cycle and was written some six years before his miserable and tragic death.

There is one humorous, or rather satirical, song in the collection. It is *The Goat* and it describes, in true Russian fashion, the marriage of a young girl to an old man. It is scarcely funny. Other items include an idiot's song (*Savishna*) and *Mushrooms* (a young girl poisons her old husband).

Vladimir Rosing sings all these varied songs in what can only be described as a definitive manner. His voice, described as a tenor, is not a great one, but his obvious mastery and knowledge of the music plus his wide musicianship make up for any lack of sensuous charm in his voice. Such a quality would be, in all events, incongruous in this music.

The transfer from the original Parlophone masters, made circa 1935, has been successfully accomplished, and the result is a disc of superior musical value. One is granted an insight into the lesser publicized activities of the Russian Master. Adequate notes—no texts.

W.

ORGAN



Bach's Royal Instrument (Vol. III). E. Power Biggs (organ). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4500) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor; Concerto in D minor after Vivaldi; Fugue in C ("Fanfare"); Fugue in G minor ("Little"); Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.*

Bach: (8) Chorale-Preludes. Carl Weinrich (organ). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-99) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme; Wo soll ich fliehen hin; Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten; Meine Seele erhebt den Herren; Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ; Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter; An Wasserflüssen Babylon; Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott.*

Volume Three of the series entitled "Bach's Royal Instrument" contains some of his best known works, which are also some of his finest. The *D minor Concerto* after Vivaldi is not as well known as the *A minor*, previously recorded and available in various other forms; however, the *D minor* is a lovely work, even more lyrical than the other one. E. Power Biggs has done as much, if not more, than any other organist in this country to promote the organ as a

concert instrument. His radio programs over the years, as well as his many fine recordings, have established him as one of our greatest organists. The current series of LP discs for Columbia will emerge within the next few years as the most extensive and finest survey of organ literature ever recorded. The present disc should prove to be one of the most popular in the series because of its content. The "Fanfare" Fugue is a clever gem (which he previously recorded for Victor), the "Little" G minor Fugue is well known as are the other two large scale works in this collection. The organ of Symphony Hall, Boston is reproduced with sparkling clarity. We have heard Biggs in a more inspired mood than he displays in several of these pieces, but his playing is ever clear, steady, and impressive without being ostentatious. All in all it is a good disc, if for nothing more than the thoroughly excellent statement of the oft-recorded *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor*—done this time in a performance which most will agree is a model.

Volume Two of the series entitled "A Survey of Bach's Organ Music" has been issued by MGM, a series which will compete with Columbia's for completeness. The present disc contains the so-called "Schubler" Chorales complete. These six chorale-preludes are unique among Bach's chorales in that they represent arrangements of arias and duets from cantatas rather than works conceived directly within the idiom of the organ. The other two numbers listed above (last in the listing) are true Bach masterpieces. "By the Waters of Babylon" is a long and moving work; Weinrich performs the five-voice setting for two manuals and double pedal. "A Mighty Fortress" is a favorite display piece in the form of a short fantasia. Weinrich's performances on this disc are very characteristic: extremely clear and transparent, and to our ears much too perky, thin, and squeaky. Reproduction is good. S.

Schönberg: Variations on a Recitative, Op. 40.

One side, and Messiaen: *Le Banquet Céleste* and Messiaen: *Transports de joie* and Messiaen: *Prière du Christ*. Clarence Watters (organ). 1-12" disc (*CLASSIC CE-1004) \$5.95.

Schönberg wrote his *Opus 40 Variations on a Recitative* in 1943; it is his only composition for organ. Some of us feel it is better that way. The notes tell us the theme, written for one voice only, is an austere recitative which seems to convey an emotion increasing more and more, and then ebbing. The theme consists of seven phrases separated from one another by fermatas and rests. The seven phrases, often varied in rhythm and pitch, in original and inverted intervals, in the original signature and transposed, are used as basis tones, as melody voices, and also as middle voices throughout. There are ten variations continuously passing into one another; a cadenza leads to the large finale, a fugue. The work depicts in its course quite a series of different feelings, and is at the same time, as the composer's name

warrants, a masterpiece of artistic craftsmanship, sovereignly using the thematic material. It is written not in the "twelve-tone system" but in a free tonality. That's what the notes say.

Messiaen's orchestral suite *L'Ascension* has been recorded by Stokowski (*CML-4214). It was originally conceived for organ, and the two final movements are here presented. *Transports de joie* is a brilliant piece of writing in line with the French school of Vierne, Tournemire, and Duprè. *The Prayer of Christ* is a series of rising and falling chords, arranged in chromatic sequences, rising gradually to a final unresolved chord. This quiet piece sets a mystical mood similar to *Le Banquet Céleste*, which represents the Last Supper, and is one of Messiaen's most restrained scores. It has great atmosphere. All of this impressionistic music we find interesting and effective, much more so than his *Nativité du Seigneur* which has had two organ recordings.

Clarence Watters is head of the Music Department at Trinity College in Hartford. He is known in most parts of this country and in Canada as one of our finest recitalists, and is considered an authority on French organ music. Using the chapel organ at Trinity, a beautiful instrument, Mr. Watters demonstrates that he is truly a fine player. All of this music is performed with smooth technical skill and interpretive finesse, and is very well recorded. S.

Messiaen: (9) Meditations pour Orgue ("La Nativité du Seigneur"). Ernest White (organ). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10069) \$4.85.

Messiaen: (9) Meditations pour Orgue ("La Nativité du Seigneur"). Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AL-ALG-3030) \$5.95.

Anyone who dislikes music in the modern idiom will loathe this record, so we will spare you further reading time at this point. Now the rest of you will find this modern masterpiece of considerable interest. Messiaen is a controversial figure in all musical quarters; he is about the most controversial in France since the death of Ravel. He grew up in an atmosphere of artistic creation and religious mysticism. He has summoned up the whole known armory of expressive musical resources (plus a few ingenious additions of his own) to lend the utmost dramatic impact to his tonal language. This applies not only to his use of instrumental resources, but also to his harmonic, rhythmic and contrapuntal procedures. His music has brought him everything from fanatic adulation to bitter denunciation. Virgil Thomson claims . . . "Nevertheless the man is a great composer. One has only to hear his music beside that of any of the standard eclectic modernists to know that. Because his really vibrates and theirs doesn't."

The present work composed in 1935 reflects the composer's Catholic mysticism. Apart from its musical originality, it is unusual in a sense that it follows none of the traditional forms for dealing with a re-

ligious theme. There is no text, no soloists, no chorus. The nine pieces comprising *The Nativity of Our Lord* are preceded by their individual titles and by quotations from the Scriptures; otherwise there is no specific program.

If you think orchestral conductors have different ideas about the same piece of music, wait until you compare these two organists working on the same thing. Each man is admittedly among the greatest performers in our country—accomplished and highly polished organists both of them. Just who puts this difficult music over better is something we cannot say. As usual, one man is better in one section than the other. We rather prefer White's organ, that in Memorial Hall, Methuen, Mass., a magnificent instrument on discs for the first time. There are times, however, when Noehren achieves better results from the organ in Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky, Ohio. Taking the composition as a whole, we felt the over-all effect of White's was more mystical, Noehren's more dramatic. White often plays the music slower and more atmospherically, Noehren plays it with more dash and flair. If you are interested, you will listen to both and select the one which conveys the music better in your opinion. S.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). Solomon (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1654) \$3.99. Coupled with **Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1222) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111. Solomon (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1607) \$3.99. Coupled with **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13** ("Pathétique"). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1222) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Egon Petri (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-4479) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 13 in E-flat, Op. 27, No. 1 and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 20 in G, Op. 49, No. 2**. One side, and **Beethoven: Rondo a Capriccio in G, Op. 129** ("Fury over the lost penny") and **Beethoven: Variations in D on Turkish March** from "Die Ruinen von Athen", Op. 76 and **Beethoven: Rondo in C, Op. 51, No. 1** and **Beethoven: Rondo in G, Op. 51, No. 2**. Hugo Steurer (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7033) \$5.95.

These three LP discs contain a wealth of Beethoven's keyboard music. Of particular interest are Solomon's recording of the "Pathétique" and the introduction to American music lovers of the German pianist, Hugo Steurer. Herr Steurer was born in Munich in 1914 and made his debut in 1934. It is said that his concerts have been sensational successes throughout Europe and that he is considered one of

Germany's leading interpreters of Beethoven's piano music. We found his performances on the present disc highly satisfactory—his art lies in the realm of staid German conservatism of which Artur Schnabel was such a great exponent.

Chopin: Polonaises (Vol. 1). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1629) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1205) \$5.72.

Chopin: Polonaises (Vol. II). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1643) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-152) \$4.67.

The discs listed above contain the Chopin Polonaises Nos. 1 to 7 inclusive plus the *Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise in E-flat, Op. 22*. These impressive pieces are played with authority and a fine sense of their inner meaning by Rubinstein and have been faithfully reproduced by RCA Victor. They should enjoy wide popularity among Chopin devotees.



DICTION

The Sermon on the Mount. David Rose (reader). 1-10" disc (*BURKE LP-1) \$3.85.

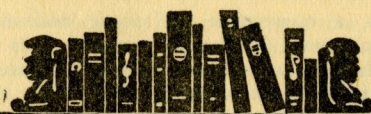
Without any fanfare, without any sentimental musical background, David Ross reads serenely and with deep meaning *The Sermon on the Mount* (King James Version: Matthew V, VI, and VII). This great passage from the Bible, which has brought help and comfort to millions of persons down through the ages, does not need any embellishment—all that it needs is to be heard as Mr. Ross reads it. A leaflet giving the text as read is included with this LP disc.



VIOLONCELLO

Bach: Suite No. 4 in E-flat for Unaccompanied 'Cello. Enrico Mainardi (violinello). 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-404) \$5.95.

This record will introduce to music lovers on this side of the Atlantic a violoncellist who is quite famous in Europe. Enrico Mainardi was born in Milan in 1897. He studied in both Italy and Germany and has appeared with many leading orchestras throughout Europe and in chamber music recitals with Dohnányi, Backhaus and other important players. There is no question but that Mainardi is a fine artist but the rather doleful Bach Suite, which he has offered as his recording debut in this country, is only for the initiated in music of this character.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Colosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 4

JUNE, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WE have been associated with the record industry for nearly forty years and never in all that time has there been such a vast amount of classic music available in recorded form. We find that in checking through the June issue of Schwann's LP Record Catalog that one publisher (Cetra-Soria) offers complete recordings of thirty-nine operas. This is more than all of the American record companies combined had to offer a few short years ago. From the same source (Schwann's) we find that there are available fifty-four Haydn symphonies, eight Schubert symphonies, and six by Tchaikovsky. Of the nine Beethoven symphonies there are sixty-three recordings listed, headed by nine different versions of both the *Third* and the *Fifth*. There are thirteen Verdi operas available in complete recordings.

The point that we wish to make is that at this time the record collector has the widest choice he is likely to have, for it is abundantly clear that record sales, although they have held up very well, will not support such a vast catalog. Very few dealers, even the largest ones in the more important cities, can afford to carry even one copy of all of the LP records listed in Schwann's.

Some of the smaller record companies are already finding it difficult to survive, and while Schwann lists 142 of them we doubt that all of them are presently in business. It would seem to us that many records that are now available will gradually disappear from the market and the size of the catalog that remains will depend upon the record sales that are available to support it.

Record collectors are enjoying a selection now that is economically unsound and our suggestion is that they make the most of it for certainly it cannot continue indefinitely.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.)

ORCHESTRA

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastorale"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8159) \$5.72.

Schubert: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8160) \$3.98. Coupled with **Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor** ("Unfinished"). 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8162) \$5.72.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8161) \$3.98. Coupled with **Schubert: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat.** 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8162) \$5.72.

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, under its new conductor William Steinberg, appears in the first of a series of new recordings under the Capitol label. It is good to have this fine orchestra back in the recording business and doubly good to have them under such a fine artist. Capitol is to be congratulated not only for acquiring the Pittsburghers, but also for bestowing on them a quality of reproduction which stands comparison with any contemporary work. There are many who will find Capitol's reproduction very much to their liking, for Capitol admittedly is not after the widest, highest, most strident upper frequencies. Rather they seek a balanced tone, with plenty of attention to a realistic and pleasing middle register. Whatever they are doing, it sounds superb on any instrument—we have tried these discs on several ranging from an inexpensive portable to a good

high fidelity job with all the trimmings. These discs sound excellent, and they sound musical; we think that is a commendable step in the recording art.

All of our readers have undoubtedly heard Steinberg over the air in NBC broadcasts and other concerts. He is known to be a good, solid, sincere conductor, not flashy or erratic, and a respected musician. His work in all three symphonies bears out his reputation. The "Unfinished" is accorded a particularly fine performance with a richness of texture and gracefulness of phrasing that makes it outstanding. The Schubert *Second* is a relatively unfamiliar work that will prove pleasing to anyone who investigates it. Light and gracious, it bounces along with a lyric beauty that Steinberg conveys expertly. The "Pastorale" has at least half a dozen competitive versions to buck and we will not undertake a detailed comparison; but you will find Steinberg can hold his own with any of them for a sound performance, and Capitol can do likewise for good reproduction. All three symphonies provide an auspicious debut of which any company could be proud. S.

Arensky: Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a. One side, and **Greig: Holberg Suite, Op. 40.** Harold Byrns and his Chamber Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8158) \$4.98.

The *Holberg Suite* makes its third appearance on LP discs with this recording. Harold Byrns and his Chamber Orchestra go after this thing hammer and tongs, and come through with a reading that bristles with vigor and energy. This is easily the most zestful reading we have ever heard, and it sounds good. The music is a delight every bar of the way, melodious, rhythmic, everything to make it completely enjoyable. The five sections are titled: Prelude, Sarabande, Gavotte, Air, and Rigaudon. It is hard to say which is the best section, but the gay prelude will stick in your mind the longest. Holberg was a contemporary of Bach and Handel, was born in Norway, finally settled down in Denmark and wrote many books and comedies which established a beginning for literature among the Danish people. Grieg's music in honor of Holberg does not attempt a characterization of Holberg or of the literary personalities whom he created. It is merely a suite in the manner which was the style in Holberg's time. No attempt is made to imitate otherwise the idiom of the 18th century composers; the melodies as well as the harmonic treatment are Grieg at his best. Originally written for piano, Grieg later arranged it for string orchestra.

Arensky, friend and admirer of Tchaikovsky, paid tribute to the older master by using one of Tchaikovsky's songs as the subject of these variations and treating them in typical Tchaikovsky manner. The song is *Christ Had a Garden* from Tchaikovsky's "Children's Songs, Opus 54." It tells the legend of the Infant Christ who picked roses which He had caused to bloom in His garden, giving the flowers to His friends and keeping for Himself only the

thorns. Arensky incorporated these variations in his *String Quartet, Opus 35*, and then published them separated as *Opus 35a*, arranged for string orchestra. In this first LP we have a sympathetic performance, beautifully phrased by Byrns and his men. Both sides of this disc offer excellent reproduction, making this is a most attractive record. S.

Glazounov: The Seasons. French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8157) \$4.98.

The Seasons was first produced in 1900 with book and choreography by Marius Petipa, one of the great ballet masters active during the second half of the 19th century and creator of such famous ballets as "Swan Lake" and "The Sleeping Princess." While most of his ballets are based on a unified dramatic story, *The Seasons* is a "Divertissement," a loosely connected sequence of diverting scenes. It consists of one act divided into four scenes which correspond with the four seasons. Except for operas, Glazounov wrote in all musical forms and for all media, but the orchestra was his real instrument. He composed eight symphonies, numerous other orchestral works and concertos, various chamber and instrumental works, and three ballet scores—"Raymonda," "Ruses d'Amour" and "The Seasons." We doubt that any of his compositions have more appeal than the present work, for it abounds in melody and rhythm typical of ballet scores.

Roger Désormière has already established himself as one of the great conductors of ballet music. His performance, with the fine French National Orchestra, is one of exemplary control and a masterful exposition of the score. Désormière never overdoes it, but he manages to get a lot out of the score while keeping it within a sturdy framework. He is an admirable musician. The reproduction of *The Seasons* is a good wide range job that is particularly pleasing in texture, nice and rich in the middle of the range and not strident. We can recommend this first LP version most highly. S.

R. Strauss: Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, Op. 60. Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9576) \$5.85.

R. Strauss: Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, Op. 60. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss. 1-12" disc (*REGENT MG-5013) \$5.45.

The concert suite based on the main musical episodes of "Der Bürger als Edelmann" was extracted by Strauss in 1918, and was soon in the repertory of symphony orchestras the world over. This suite of incidental music to Molière's comedy has retained much more popularity than the lengthy original concoction of Strauss and his librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal. We have various examples of such things: the Weber overtures have become popular and permanent fixtures while the operas have disappeared; Strauss' own *Rosenkavalier*, on the other hand, is

still a popular opera as well as is the orchestral suite drawn from it. These things have one general pattern: whether or not the original work in complete form remains in the repertory, the overtures or orchestral suits from the works usually are played and enjoyed frequently. Many persons consider *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* one of Strauss' weaker and more boring works. We think it is not as exciting as some of his tone poems, but then it is not supposed to be. It is scored for a smaller orchestra than usual with Strauss, and is not of the customary heroic proportions. The suite is in nine sections, arranged for effectiveness and not following the sequence of the play.

These two versions, both composer conducted, are an unusual event. Since neither company supplies the dates of the recordings, we can only go by what our ears tell us. It is clearly apparent that the Regent disc is preferable, for it contains a body of sound comparable to what we want to hear these days. The Decca reproduction is older, feebler, not as clear, not as brilliant. The performances are, of course, very similar; the Vienna is a bit more spacious and relaxed. Regent offers good surfaces in addition to better reproduction; but they also give you a completely blank side on the back of the record cover—no notes whatever. Decca's notes are informative and helpful, but the better sound is on the Regent disc so that is our recommendation. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 45 in F sharp-minor ("Farewell"). Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Wilhelm Seegelman. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 96 in D** ("Miracle"). Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7310) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 99 in E-flat. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D** ("The Clock"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5102) \$5.95.

All of the four Haydn symphonies listed above are already available in LP versions, and it would seem that there is no crying need for additional recordings of them. However, here they are for your consideration. There may be some reason for the Vox disc because it contains two superb renditions of Nos. 45 and 96, and if you are interested in these Haydn works, we suggest that you select this record. We can see no reason for the Westminster disc; it is in no way distinguished.

Vivaldi: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 3 ("L'estro armonico"). Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7420) \$17.85.

Although "L'estro armonico" is Vivaldi's best known work, this is the first time that it has been recorded completely. As all record collectors know, there have been any number of recordings made of

various concerti from the suite—the famous No. 11 in D minor has appeared in many versions for symphony orchestra and in all sorts of arrangements for solo instruments. Better known than the original works are Bach's transcriptions—Bach selected six of the twelve in Vivaldi's suite and transcribed them—some for harpsichord, some for organ, and one for four harpsichords and strings.

For the discerning music lover and student the present set of discs holds much music that will be deeply rewarding, if he will but take the time to investigate it. It has been authoritatively performed by a fine group of players under the distinguished direction of Rolf Reinhardt and has been recorded with fine fidelity by Vox. Excellent notes, which will be of great help to those interested, have been supplied by Herman Adler.

Falla: El Sombrero de tres Picos ("The Three-Cornered Hat") (complete). Amparito Pélis de Prulière (soprano) with l'Orchestre de l'Opéra-Comique (Paris) conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7034) \$5.95.

Falla: El Sombrero de tres Picos ("The Three-Cornered Hat") (complete). Amparito Pélis de London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. One side, and **Falla: Noches en los Jardines de España** ("Nights in the Gardens of Spain"). Clifford Curzon (piano) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 1-12" disc (*L-LLP-445) \$5.95.

A complete performance of *The Three Cornered Hat* is a rare occasion, and any performance as fine as this one is no everyday occurrence. Jean Martinon has appeared before on other labels doing some fine conducting, but this is his best so far. The complete ballet is most enjoyable, maintaining interest all the time. It is a pity we hear only the three dances in most concerts, for the complete work is worth frequent performance. The vocal sections are short, incidental moments which add color. As for the familiar dances, you will find they fit into the score perfectly, and Martinon plays them capitably. The London disc has orchestral excerpts from Part I consisting of: Introduction, Afternoon, Dance of the Miller's Wife, The Corregidor, The Miller's Wife, and The Grapes. This has been adapted from the 78 rpm edition, which also included the familiar three dances. It sounds rather tame and aimless after hearing the complete score. For those who want only "highlights," they are better off the with usual suite of three—for that is the cream of the score.

Curzon made a recording of *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* which was issued here about five years ago on 78 rpm, accompaniment by Jorda and the National Symphony. A copy of the 78 edition is not available at this writing, but we assume this to be a new version—London has re-recorded many works for LP. Whatever it is, it turns out to be a splendid performance, just as the 78 version was. Curzon is a

fine artist, and one sensitive enough to portray the delicate colors of these pictures with a subtle art. He is a bit more pastel in shading than Rubinstein, who has a good version with Golschmann (*V-LM-1091). Rubinstein's coupling is a Mozart concerto, which could be a deciding factor if you wish the Falla piece. In all of the recordings discussed above, you will find excellent reproduction, with the Urania being particularly brilliant in texture. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or—Ballet Suite. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34.** French National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8155) \$4.98.

Rimsky-Korsakov: The Snow Maiden—Ballet Music. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig, and **Moussorgsky: Khovantchina**—Entr'acte and Persian Dances. One side, and **Moussorgsky: A Night on Bald Mountain and Moussorgsky: Boris Godunov**—Polonaise. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7035) \$5.95.

There are other recordings of *Coq d'Or* and the *Capriccio Espagnol* listed in the LP lists, but it is very doubtful whether any of them are better than this new Capitol issue. Kostelanetz' idea of the *Capriccio* is more slick and suave, but Désormière has a brilliant exposition of the music that is beyond cavil as far as being musicianly and in good taste is concerned, and it is flashy and exciting in a genuine way, not synthetic. Beecham issued a *Coq d'Or* lately which is a good performance, but he has met his match and then some in Désormière, who seems to have more of an affinity for this type of music than even the esteemed Englishman. The reproduction on both sides of this Capitol disc is something to rave about too; it is the best yet from Capitol and by any standards it is magnificent! As most folks are quite familiar with these Rimsky-Korsakov canvasses, we will say nothing further in praise of this exceptionally fine disc, except to give it our unqualified endorsement.

As for the Urania disc, if the five numbers that appear in the collection appeal to you, you will find them very well performed here and set forth with excellent reproduction. The *Night on Bald Mountain* is played with plenty of dash and fantasy, but it is kept well under control. This piece too often runs wild in an attempt to be eerie; in this instance Leopold Ludwig demonstrates that it can be played with imagination while keeping within the bounds of the score. It is a refreshingly good job of conducting. His Moussorgsky excerpts from *Khovantchina* and *Boris Godunov* are equally careful performances that ably, and fairly, portray the genius of the great composer. The *Persian Dances* are particularly attractive. Rimsky's ballet music from *Snegurochka* (The Snow Maiden), is about all that remains today from that opera. While pleasant enough—Dance of the Tumblers, etc.—it is not

among the greatest of ballet music. The playing of the Berlin Philharmonic in the Moussorgsky excerpts is notably good. S.

Sibelius: Pelléas et Mélisande, Op. 46. One side, and **Sibelius: Karelia Suite, Op. 11.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jussi Blomstedt. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7038) \$5.95.

The LP catalogs are certainly not overburdened with recordings of Sibelius. It is a pleasure to have these two suites added to the lists for the first time. The *Pelléas et Mélisande Suite* is a collection of the incidental music which Sibelius composed for Maeterlinck's mystical drama. The suite was published for small orchestra as Opus 46 and contains eight parts, originally written as preludes to scenes, sections of melodrama, and songs: At the Castle Gate, Melisande, A Spring in the Park, The Three Blind Sisters, Pastoral, Melisande at the Spinning Wheel, Entr'acte, and The Death of Melisande.

The *Karelia Suite* is drawn from music written for a series of historical tableaux gotten up by the students of Viborg University. The subjects were taken from Karelia's history, and were treated by Sibelius in artistic fashion. The music alone first appeared in a suite of eight movements, and was later cut to the three movements here recorded: Intermezzo, Ballade, and Alla marcia. A recording of the Alla marcia by Beecham of several years ago played beside the present effort will demonstrate again (if it is needed) what a truly great conductor the Englishman is—the difference is striking indeed between these two performances. The other two Karelia movements are given thoughtful and competent readings by conductor Blomstedt. But we think both orchestra and conductor are better in the *Pelléas* suite, where they achieve some lovely effects in the softer and more restrained passages. Again this performance does not efface the older Beecham one made a number of years ago of three sections only. The present one, being complete, is welcome, and will offer listeners something new and worth while. The reproduction is good, a trifle thin and boxy in spots, but clear and bright. S.

Dvořák: In Nature's Realm, Op. 91 and Dvořák: Carnival, Op. 92. One side, and **Dvořák: Otello, Op. 93 and Dvořák: Notturmo in B, Op. 40.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1141) \$5.95.

During 1891-92 Dvořák wrote a cycle of three "Overtures" with the title of "Nature, Life and Love" in mind. However, as each work was complete in itself they were published with the titles and opus numbers indicated in the heading above. The fourth selection is a lovely work for strings that the composer wrote some twenty years previously.

Speaking of the "Overtures," the first, *In Nature's Realm*, is a pastoral selection that seems to indicate the beauty of nature that is not disturbed by the faults of humans. The *Carnaval* depicts the struggles

of humanity in general and *Otello* dramatically shows the tragedy of sensual love and the jealousy it generates. A theme from *In Nature's Realm* occurs in the following two works which reminds us that no matter what we humans do, Mother Nature continues along in her pure state; we can change and deface ourselves but Nature can never be defiled.

Of the three selections, *Carnaval* is the most popular and best-known. Any number of recordings of it have appeared from time to time since the early days of electric recording. This is the first time that we recall that all three works have appeared at one time by the same orchestra and conductor. It is nice to have them thus available and we predict that the present LP disc will enjoy a wide and continued sale. The performance and the reproduction are both of high calibre.

R.

CONCERTO



Schumann: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 54. Dinu Lipatti (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan (TNR Dec. '51). One side, and **Grieg: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 16.** Dinu Lipatti (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4525) \$5.45.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 54. Monique Haas (piano) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7522) \$3.85.

There are so many recordings on LP of these two concertos that a detailed comparison is impossible here; but if it is value you seek, the new Columbia coupling of the Grieg and Schumann will prove hard to beat. Lipatti is a fine artist, whose career was unfortunately cut short by his untimely death. The Schumann was previously issued by Columbia on a 10" disc; this has been withdrawn and the new 12" coupling takes its place. The Grieg Concerto is played beautifully, to our ears even better than the Schumann. The two on one disc is certainly a perfect pairing for record buyers. Reproduction on both sides is tops.

Of the various other versions of the Schumann concerto, our preference is still strongly for the Noväes-Klemperer one on Vox (*PL-7110), which we praised highly in these columns when it was issued recently. It has the edge on all others and remains the finest performance of the work we have ever heard at any time. Monique Haas, in the Decca disc listed above, gives a thoroughly idiomatic performance with strong orchestral support in a reasonably resonant recording. If you want the work with no coupling, it is worth considering, being a 10" disc at a modest price; but the 12" discs containing this work as played as Noväes, Serkin, or Rubinstein may appeal to you more.

The Grieg concerto has been treated to several fine recordings in addition to the new Lipatti one. His competition includes those by Curzon, Gieseking, and Rubinstein, with the last named in a coupling with Liszt's *Concerto No. 1*. None of these gentlemen does notably better with the Grieg than Lipatti, whose playing many will consider the best available. Columbia has squeezed a lot of music on each side of this disc; you might check your copy for sizzle particularly near the center—ours was not too clean on the Grieg side.

S.

Mozart: Concerto in E-flat for 2 Pianos, K. 365.

One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in F for 2 Pianos, K. 242.** Paul Badura-Skoda and Reine Gianoli (duo-pianists) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5095) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5097) \$5.95.

All of the four Mozart concerti listed above are already listed in the present LP catalog. The *Concerto in F*, K. 242 appears in its original form for three pianos recorded by Lhevinne, Vronsky and Babin (*C-ML-4098). We suggest hearing this version, which is coupled with a fine rendition of K. 365 by Vronsky and Babin before making your decision. The present recording of K. 491 should be compared with the very fine Lili Kraus version (*VX-PL-6880), and the K. 595 with the Casadesus recording (*C-ML-2186).

Brahms: Double Concerto in A minor, Op. 102.

Jean Fournier (violin) and Antonio Janigro (viola) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5117) \$5.95.

The avalanche of LP discs rolls on with many duplications piling up along the way. The April 1952 TNR carried our review of the Brahms *Double Concerto* in the new recording by Milstein and Piatigorsky with Reiner and the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (*V-LM-1191). The present offering by Westminster finds itself against mighty stiff competition and at a higher price. Whatever advantages this Westminster disc may have, we do not think them sufficient to make it more desirable than the Victor recording. Westminster may have a wider range, but the string tone is wiry and unpleasant at times, notably at the beginning of the performance. The general character of the Victor disc is more pleasing and realistic. The orchestral fabric seems richer and closer in the Victor disc. As for the soloists, Fournier and Janigro are fine artists but they never exceed Milstein and Piatigorsky in technique and polish and, in our opinion, do not match them for poetry. There is something warm and deeply felt in the Victor recording which is

lacking in the Westminster disc.

Westminster supplies unusually interesting, thoughtful, and well written program notes which include the following statement. It was a life-long struggle of Brahms to evolve a treatment of the concerto in which the solo instrument would neither dominate nor be dominated by the orchestra. There is much to be said for the B-flat piano concerto and violin concerto as triumphant solutions of the problem; but in this score, the problem ceases to exist. From first to last the solo instruments are wedded to each other and to the orchestra in a musical matrimony that lacks but one attribute of the ideal marriage—offsprings to perpetuate the line. For a man labeled a conservative by his detractors, this concerted work represents an innovation so startling that no subsequent composer has undertaken to emulate it.

S.

Vivaldi: (6) Concertos for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 10. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) with R. V. Lacroix (harpsichord) and Louis de Froment and his Chamber Group. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7150) \$5.95.

This disc is not for the uninitiated. Even for a student of the flute and of Vivaldi's music it would seem to us that to listen to these six concerti at one sitting would not be a very happy task. As far as we are concerned, when you have heard one you have heard them all—there is a great similarity among them, that's for sure.

Handel: (6) Organ Concertos, Op. 7. Walter Kraft (organ) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7200) \$5.95.

In the March 1952 issue of TNR we reviewed the six organ concertos which comprise Opus 4, a complete volume similar to the above and performed by the same artists. We now have the second set, just as well performed and just as light and interesting musically. These Handel organ concertos are not too heavy, for they have a secular nature that is different from many large organ works. They were destined, in the first place, as show pieces in which the virtuoso could exhibit his powers and those of the instrument. Then too, they were inserted between sections of oratorios with the definite purpose of providing relaxation, and in order that a lighter atmosphere might pervade the audience. While they did not attempt to add anything to the interpretation of the oratorio, they did in some cases contain echoes of other works (for example, the third concerto of the present set opens with the phrase of the Hallelujah chorus). Another interesting thing concerning these concertos is the fact that their production in a theatre must have meant a much smaller instrument than those used in cathedrals and churches. It is therefore wise that these recordings use an instrument that is not too large, preserving nicely the clarity and lightness of the music.

These sets of Handel organ concertos can be recommended to those who like chamber music just as much as to those who like organ music. We can even imagine some folks putting these on their machine for a couple of hours of pleasant background music while they go about other business. Their inherent lightness is becoming to a spring and summer season. Vox has made a worthy addition to the LP lists with both albums of the Handel organ concertos.



CHORAL

Bach: Cantata No. 84 ("Ich bin vergnügt"). (Sung in German). Magda Laszlo (soprano) with the Akademiechor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 106** ("Actus Tragicus"). (Sung in German). Hilde Rössel-Majdan (contralto); Alfred Poell (basso); the Akademiechor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5125) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 198 ("Trauer-Ode"). (Sung in German). Magda Laszlo (soprano); Hilde Rössel-Majdan (contralto); Waldemar Kmentt (tenor); Alfred Poell (basso); the Akademiechor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5123) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 56 ("Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 82** ("Ich habe genug"). (Sung in German). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (basso) with the Berlin Motet Singers and the Ristenpart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Ristenpart. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9595) \$5.85.

Westminster continues its excellent series of Bach Cantata recordings by releasing two records containing three works, two of them recorded for the first time. The most ambitious of the cantatas, No. 198 *Trauer-Ode* is not specifically a "church" cantata in the sense that the majority of Bach's efforts in this form are—rather it approaches the feeling and form of his larger works, such as the *Magnificat*. The instrumentation is on a larger scale than is usual in this type of composition. As befits a memorial piece (it was written for a public memorial service for Queen Christiane Eberhardine of Poland and Saxony), it is sombre and moving music. The soloists are all of the first rank and Dr. Scherchen's direction is plausible and musically.

The other Westminster disc is devoted to two regular church cantatas, the one, *Ich bin Vergnügt*, is a solo cantata and Magda Laszlo sings with feeling and purity of tone. This work is also recorded for the first time. *Cantata No. 106* "Actus Tragicus" or alternatively "Gottes Zeit" occupies the reverse side and, despite the high numeration, it is an early work, dating from about 1708 when Bach was 23 years old.

It is difficult to imagine Bach as a sanguine young man (although he must have been) and this music, with its old style harking back to Buxtehude and Schutz, is thoroughly delightful. The soloists, Hilde Rössel-Majdan and Alfred Poell are the sort that leave one speechless—their work is perfection itself as is Dr. Scherchen's direction.

The Decca disc is an exact duplication of the Vox record by Doda Conrad (TNR March '51). Herr Fischer-Dieskau sounds much better here than in his previous release and the over-all recording has more authenticity than the earlier Vox release which was, however, a very fine one due to Conrad's compelling vocalism.

The recording in the Westminster discs is superb, that on the Decca very good. The same applies to the jacket notes — Westminster supplies text and translation separately, leaving plenty of space for Canby's informative remarks. Decca gives an English translation only and two short paragraphs on Bach's Cantatas in general. W.

Handel: Te Deum for the Peace of Utrecht. One and one-half sides, and **Handel: Coronation Anthem** ("Let thy hand be strengthened"). Soloists, Chorus and Chamber Orchestra of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-2046) \$5.95.

Handel's *Te Deum for the Peace of Utrecht* is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, one of the most inspired works of sacred music. It seems strange that a German composer (although visiting in England, Handel was at the time *Kapellmeister* to the Elector of Hanover) should have been chosen to write music for the celebration of a victory that was highly unsatisfactory to Germany. It could never happen today (*on sent le progrès*) but Handel got a job and a yearly pension of £200. This work supplanted Purcell's which had heretofore been given on occasions of national celebration. It is modeled somewhat after the English Master's piece, but the emotional exuberance and typical Handelian irresistibility are already in evidence.

The performance on this Haydn Society disc is an excellent one, as is usually the case when Mogens Wöldike is in charge of affairs. Understanding and a complete knowledge of the music are the hallmarks of his performances. The drastic contrasts, as written by Handel, are never underscored but given full value. The magnificent chorus *Day by Day we magnify Thee* is full of joy and excitement, while the contralto solo *When Thou took'st upon Thee* is tender and full of mystic gentleness. The soloists are all more than adequate, Else Brems and Einer Noerby being especially fine.

The second side of the record is filled out with a first recording of the *Coronation Anthem*. This was written on the occasion of the coronation of George II, Handel's former patron! Not a whit embarrassed, Handel wrote his anthem on the 14th and 15th verses of the 89th Psalm. The newly

crowned monarch was well pleased and added another £200 to Handel's yearly stipend. The performance here matches the music which is very good.

The recording is excellent, and for those interested in choral music, the singing of the Danish State Radio Choir will be a delight. Interesting and informative notes have been supplied by Karl Geiringer. W.

Haydn: Stabat Mater. (Sung in Latin). Anny Felbermayer (soprano); Sieglinde Wagner (contralto); W. Kmentt (tenor); O. Wiener (basso); with J. Nebois (organ), the Akademie Kammerchor and the Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna Symphony conducted by Hans Gillesberger. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7410) \$11.90.

This is a first recording of more than passing interest. Haydn's *Stabat Mater* dates approximately from 1770, the exact date of composition not being known. This work played an important role in Haydn's artistic life. It was a success at its first performance in Vienna and was circulated throughout Austria quickly and thence to most of the European capitals. As a result of the Paris performance, the six "Paris" symphonies were commissioned.

The *Stabat Mater* is divided into the customary arias, choruses and numbers in which both soloists and ensemble take part. The work is less operatic in nature than some of the *Messes* as befits its text but is, on occasion, startlingly dramatic. The music is tuneful, gentle and mostly in slow tempo, reminding one, in certain psychological aspects, of the later *Seven Words of the Savior*.

The soloists are all of high calibre, Anna Felbermayer a silvery-voiced soprano being especially effective. Only slightly less so are Sieglinde Wagner and Waldemar Kmentt, the latter sounding much less bumptious here than in certain previous recordings. Otto Weiner, although listed as a basso, is more baritone in quality. He is satisfactory, in all events. The Akademie Kammerchor and a chamber orchestra under the direction of Hans Gillesberger give a well-integrated performance.

H. C. Robbins Landon, who has transferred his activities (and, it would seem, his predilection for Haydn's music) from the Haydn Society to Vox, supplies scholarly notes. The only serious omission is that of the text—a service that would benefit those not too familiar with this type of music. Anyway, it is always nice to know what is going on and without a text that is virtually impossible. W.

Haydn: Missa Sancti Bernardi de Offida ("Heilgmesse"). Copenhagen Boys' and Men's Choir with the Danish Royal Opera Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-2048) \$5.95.

"When the eternally young (Haydn) returned to Vienna, at the age of sixty-three," writes the eminent Haydn scholar Karl Geiringer, "elated by the

triumphs which he had won in London . . . he decided to begin a new chapter in his brilliant career and henceforth to devote himself to vocal rather than to instrumental music." The first fruits of this decision were *The Creation*, the *Missa in Tempore Belli* and the present *Heiligmesse*, or more properly *Missa Sancti Bernardi de Offida*.

This genial and expressive composition is a sheer delight. From the opening Kyrie (which Geiringer aptly points out is "not so much a supplication for mercy as thanks of the faithful who feel that the Lord has heard his prayer") to the serene and moving *Agnus Dei*, it is a triumphant affirmation of Haydn's personal Christianity. In addition to the fervent melodies, one is treated to many intricate polyphonic devices and unconventional scoring as, for example, the inclusion of trumpets and tympani in the *Benedictus*.

The Copenhagen Boys' and Men's Choir sing the *Mass* in what can be truthfully described as virtually perfect fashion. The use of boys' voices lends a medieval effect that would be unobtainable by any other means. The soloists (unnamed) are of high calibre and the whole affair comes off superbly.

The large orchestra under Mogens Wöldike proves to be a well trained organization that plays with finesse and style. Wöldike is known throughout Northern Europe as a musician who has specialized in Baroque music, and his recent recordings for the Haydn Society, as well as for His Master's Voice, have revealed another facet of his genius—that of a wide sympathy and ability in the music of the Classic era.

The notes on the jacket are exemplary and, as they should be but so seldom are, informative. The recording is of high rank both technically and artistically. W.

Villa-Lobos: Mass of Saint Sebastian. Chorus of the University of California at Berkeley directed by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4516) \$5.45.

Heitor Villa-Lobos is, indisputably, one of the greatest of South American composers. He has written successfully in many conventional forms and superbly in many exotic ones. Prior to this issue Villa-Lobos has been represented primarily by the unusual forms, but now we have one of his compositions in what may be considered one of the oldest and most traditional of musical forms, the *Mass*. This work, written in 1937 is titled *Mass of St. Sebastian* for, as the composer points out, Sebastian is the patron saint of the City of Rio de Janeiro; in fact, the official name of the city is Sao Sebastiao do Rio de Janeiro.

The *Mass of St. Sebastian* possesses, however, many unique features—it is written in 3-part counterpoint almost exclusively and all in the treble clef. This would indicate a choir exclusively made up of boys' or women's voices, but it develops that the

sopranos are doubled an octave lower, by tenors, the mezzos by baritones and the altos by basses. The resultant effect is one of great beauty and mystery.

Musically, the work is deeply religious in feeling and concept. It is, says the composer, "closer to the sacred style than to my own style." There are occasions when one doubts, not Villa-Lobos, but this extraordinary statement. In all events, the *Mass* is not in the least pungent and discordant as much of Villa-Lobos' music is and that is probably what he had in mind.

Werner Janssen and the Chorus of the University of California at Berkeley do a magnificent job! The *a capella* singing of the approximately 130 members of this fine group is a joy to hear and the performance shows loving care and careful rehearsing in about equal proportions.

Columbia has supplied a first-rate technical job and has even gone so far as to supply the complete text and an intelligent commentary on the music.

W.

Verdi: Quattro Pezzi Sacri. Vienna Kammerchor with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1136) \$5.95.

These, the last compositions completed by Verdi, may be regarded, writes Francis Toye in his excellent study of the Italian Master, "at least as much as an expression of aesthetic as of religious faith, for in different degrees they represent an attempt, perhaps conscious, to adapt some characteristics of the Palestrina and Marcello he so greatly admired to the requirements of contemporary taste." The music must not, however, be regarded as "copies of the antique," for Verdi would never indulge himself to that extent.

The *Ave Maria* and *Laudi alla Vergine Maria*, both written *a capella* may be considered together. The first piece is written on a so-called "enigmatic scale" that someone sent in to the *Gazzetta Musicale* that captured Verdi's imagination. It is very beautiful. The *Laudi alla Vergine Maria* is based on words taken from the last canto of Dante's *Paridiso*. It is an admirable expression of tenderness and mystical reverence.

With the other two pieces, *Stabat Mater* and *Te Deum* one encounters another style. Not only are they scored for large orchestra, they are written in the dramatic manner one heard before in the operas and the great *Requiem*. The *Te Deum* is undoubtedly the most important of the *Quattro Pezzi Sacri*, not only for its emotional content but for its amazing vitality and largeness of utterance.

This performance by the now well-known Vienna Kammerchor is uniformly good. Henry Swoboda directs the chorus and Vienna State Opera Orchestra in musicianly fashion, and the whole enterprise comes off in a thrilling manner. Some of the thrills, especially in the *Stabat Mater* and *Te Deum* are due to the lifelike recording achieved by the

engineers.

This is the first complete recording of the *Quatri Pezzi Sacri* although the *Stabat Mater* was recorded by Mercury (TNR May '51) and the *Ave Maria* and the *Laudi alla Vergine Maria* by Allegro (TNR Oct. '51). The present version is superior to its predecessors. W.

Mozart: Thamos, König in Agypten, K. 345.

Gustav Neidlinger (basso) with the Pro Musica Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7350) \$5.95.

Mozart's uncanny ability to transform base metal into gold (musically speaking) was never more evident than in the music he wrote for Baron von Gebler's bombastic play, *Thamos, König in Agypten*. For this grandiose and stilted effusion, Mozart wrote five instrumental entr'actes, two choruses and a final chorus with bass solo, the text of which does not come from the play.

The music, as has been intimated above, is among some of the greatest that Mozart ever wrote. It is, by more than mere chance, a distant relative to the incomparable *Zauberflöte*. Von Gebler's play was Masonically inspired and some of the tunes, notably that of the first chorus, *Schön weichet dir, Sonne*, reappear in Mozart's last opera. The five instrumental interludes are descriptive and represent the young composer in his element—that is, in theatrical music.

The choruses, especially the first and second ones, are veritable masterpieces, even for Mozart, and are sung in superb style by the Pro Musica (Stuttgart) Chorus. The third chorus features Gustav Niedlinger, a basso of uncommon gifts. It is always a source of amazement to this reviewer that the small choruses and orchestras of Central Europe are able to infuse so much enthusiasm and spirit into their work. Certainly their experiences in the last ten to twelve years have not dampened their musical ardor!

To Vox and Rolf Reinhardt must go the sincere thanks of all music lovers, especially those who have an abiding love for Mozart (the present writer included), for making the work available. The record is one that can be recommended without reserve—it combines, in a manner quite unique in these days, magnificent music, a stirring performance and excellent recording. W.

A Treasury of Madrigals. Renaissance Singers directed by Lehman Engel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4517) \$5.45.

This disc is aptly titled *A Treasury of Madrigals*, for on its surface are captured seventeen wonderful examples of this now virtually extinct form of music.

The madrigal movement started in Italy in the 16th century and swept across the continent reaching England, where it had its greatest flowering, in about 1588. The music makes no pretensions to immortality, it was written for amusement or to the

Glory of God only, and therein, perhaps, lies its greatness, for the madrigal was written, not to please the public but the composer himself.

The selection for this record has been most judiciously accomplished by Mr. Engel who says he has "known intimately and admired extravagantly" these madrigals and other part songs. Claude le Jeune is represented by his *Reveyez venir du printemps*; di Lasso and Monteverdi are included as is a strange work by the Prince of Venosa, Carlo Gesualdo, *Tu m'uccidi o crudèle*. Gesualdo, one of the oddest figures in the history of music, was an experimenter and, probably, as more than one commentator has remarked, a madman. His harmonies and chromaticism sound modern even today—they certainly must have startled his contemporaries.

The bulk of the disc is devoted to the English Madrigal as exemplified in the works of Vautour, Weelkes, Tallis, Byrd and Gibbon. The last is the author of such superb compositions as *What is our life?* and *The Silver Swan*. William Byrd's *I thought that Love* is included as is Tallis' *When shall my sorrowful sighing*.

The Renaissance Singers, a thoroughly trained and polished group sing these old songs in satisfying fashion. They exhibit an understanding and sing with a purity of tone that underscores the inherent beauty of the music. To Mr. Engel must go credit for training the group and preparing the works. It was obviously a labor of love and the results amply attest to this fact. Columbia has matched everyone's efforts with admirable recording. W.

Beethoven: Christus am Olberg, Op. 85. Margit Opawsky (soprano); Radko Delorco (tenor); Walter Berry (basso); with the Vienna Kammerchor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1135) \$5.95.

Beethoven was seldom happy with his excursions into vocal music and *Christus am Olberg* is hardly an exception. The work was popular in his lifetime, which is also an indication that it was not one of the composer's better or more profound efforts.

The work is an early one despite the high opus number. It was written, as Beethoven put it "in fourteen days, amid all sorts of tumult and other disagreeable and frightening circumstances" and was performed for the first time on 5 April 1803. Its reception was good and the oratorio became popular in Vienna and elsewhere. Later criticism wrote *Christus am Olberg* off as a minor work, an unsuccessful attempt at oratorio. Perhaps a re-evaluation would be in order, for it is quite likely that several generations of music lovers have grown up, in this country at least, without ever having heard the composition.

The presentation here is a stirring one. Chief among its assets is a *heldentenor*, new to records, by the name of Radko Delorco, who sings the music allotted to Jesus in magnificent fashion. His voice

is reminiscent of Roswaenge's, without the sense of strain that has recently become apparent in the Danish tenor's voice. What a Florestan or Max Herr Delorco would make! Margit Opawsky singing the Seraph reveals a fine clear soprano of considerable power and expressiveness. Walter Berry is a full-voiced Peter and the hard working Vienna Kammerchor sings with all its wonted effectiveness and color.

Henry Swoboda directs the performance with vigor and style. It is a convincing presentation, and one's opinion falls between the approbation of Beethoven's contemporaries and the later criticism that belittled the music. It is not great Beethoven, neither is it a potboiler. *Christus am Olberg* is an example of Beethoven's work in the choral genre that ranks with the *Choral Fantasia* but falls below the *Missa Solemnis* and *Ninth Symphony*.

Excellent if somewhat coarse recording is featured, and the complete German text is given; but unfortunately an English translation has not been supplied.

W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 7 in F, Op. 59, No. 1 ("Rasoumovsky No. 1"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5127) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 9 in C, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Rasoumovsky No. 2"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5134) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 12 in E-flat, Op. 127. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5120) \$5.95.

These three LP discs will give chamber music lovers on this side of the Atlantic a grand opportunity to study the work of the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet—an ensemble that has been famous for the concerts it has given throughout Europe and the British Isles for a number of years. The Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet was founded in 1934 and its members were drawn from the string section of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—all of them studied at the famous Wiener Staatskademie.

We found the present recorded performances of these important Beethoven quartets highly inspiring and do not hesitate to recommend them to the attention of our readers. Westminster has achieved reproduction of the highest quality.

OPERA



Flotow: Martha (complete). (Sung in German). Erna Berger (soprano); Else Tegetthoff (mezzo-soprano); Peter Anders (tenor); Josef Greindl (basso); with the Berlin Civic Opera Chorus and the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-217) \$17.85.

One of the great favorites of the previous generation or two was Flotow's *Martha*. Since the early

Twenties, however, the opera has not enjoyed any degree of popularity in this country. Famous casts undoubtedly aided in making the work popular: for example the production of 1906 that had Sembrich, Walker, Caruso and Plançon, or even the last Metropolitan revival with Alda, Howard, Gigli and de Luca. *Martha*, for all the snide remarks written about it, still remains virtually indestructible. The sweet, almost saccharine, melodies still charm and when presented with a good cast can still furnish a good evening's entertainment. Naturally those who demand seriousness or want to be stirred emotionally are advised to look (or listen) elsewhere.

A first-rate cast, headed by Erna Berger, gives a fine performance on these records. Miss Berger, who always sings well, is vivacious and captivating as Lady Harriet. What little musical characterization there is in the role she realizes. Peter Anders gives a good account of Lionel. His voice still retains a considerable amount of freshness and his artistry is above reproach. Else Tegetthoff is a throaty mezzo who is perfectly cast as Nancy. Josef Greindl, a better than average basso, makes a convincing Plunkett. The ensembles, notably the *Spinning Quartet* and the *Good Night Quartet* are very well handled.

Arthur Rother directs the Berlin Civic Opera Chorus and the Radio Berlin Orchestra with notable success. His conception is not sensational in any way, but is in good taste in all respects.

Urania has given us better recording, there being sundry rattles and muddy passages in this job. It is comparable to the same company's *Hansel and Gretel* and was probably made at the same time. A libretto is included.

W.

A Maria Cebotari Memorial. (Sung in German). Maria Cebotari (soprano) and Walter Ludwig (tenor) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7036) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Salome*—Final Scene (R. Strauss); *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—Märtern aller Arten (Mozart); *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Deh vieni, no tardar (Mozart); *Madama Butterfly*—Love Duet (Puccini).

The late Maria Cebotari was undoubtedly one of the finest singing actresses of her generation. Her tragic death in June of 1949 at the age of 39 deprived the world of a gifted singer in her prime.

The present disc, unfortunately, will not convince many people of her varied gifts. The reason for this melancholy fact will become apparent on the first playing—the recording is very poor. For some curious reason a poor electrical recording is much worse than an acoustical one and a poor LP is worse than a poor 78 RPM—if only because it lasts longer. The sundry rattles and distortion in this disc are decidedly unpleasant to hear. On the other hand, old acoustical recordings managed to convey, sometimes with surprising clarity, a great deal of the voice, although the orchestra was, as they say,

strictly from hunger.

Miss Cebotari is heard first in the taxing *Martern aller Arten*. The aria is extremely well sung, without the warmth that Erna Berger achieves albeit with a greater degree of brilliance. The recording of this aria is fair. The finale of *Salome* is miserably recorded but superbly performed. The best recording is vouchsafed the *Figaro* aria (Susanna's Act IV) and, although it is sung in German, it is the high spot of this record. The complete *Love Duet* from "Madama Butterfly" is a wretched job technically, the unfortunate Herr Ludwig sounding as though he were in a room removed from the recording microphone.

One can only surmise that the various tapes from which this record was made were recorded a good many years ago when tape techniques were not very far advanced. One also suspects that the processing could have been improved upon. In all events, the disc is a disappointment and, as pointed out above, does not begin to do justice to the glorious-voiced Cebotari. W.

Giordano: Andrea Chenier (complete). (Sung in Italian). Franca Sacchi (soprano); Anna Maria Marcangeli (mezzo-soprano); Gino Sarri (tenor); Antonio Manca Serra (baritone); with supporting soloists and the Rome Opera House Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alberto Paoletti. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-218) \$17.85.

Here is an LP first that is very welcome—and one that was well worth waiting for. Giordano's *Andrea Chenier* is here given a sumptuous recording and performance that will place it high on the lists of all opera enthusiasts.

The first performance of this, Giordano's first and perhaps finest opera, took place at the famed La Scala theatre in Milan on 28 March 1896 and a little less than eight months later had its first American performance at the Academy of Music in New York. The first Metropolitan performance was on 7 March 1921 with Gigli in the name role. The production had been planned for Caruso but his illness (he sang his last opera on 24 December 1920) prevented his appearing in the work. The Madelaine of the presentation was Claudia Muzio.

Urania's performance utilizes essentially the same male singers as in the *Otello* recording, only here both are much more at home. Gino Sarri does a fine job as the romantic poet and his principal arias the thrilling *Un di all'azzurro spazio*, the lyric *Come un bel di di Maggio* and the dramatic *Sì, fui soldato* are all well sung. The last act love duet, one of the real high spots of this dramatic opera, is superbly handled by Sarri and Franca Sacchi. Sgra. Sacchi, a dramatic soprano with a large voice that is capably handled, also makes the most of her chance, the great aria *La mama morta*. Antonio Manca Serra, who was only a so-so Iago, surprises with a sterling performance as Gerard. The minor roles are in

capable hands; especially noteworthy are Marcangeli as the Countess di Coigny and Passarotti as Mathieu.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the success of both singers and the performance lies in the very fine recording achieved by Urania's technicians. The orchestra sounds very natural, and since the orchestration is vivid and colorful, much is added to the performance by its brilliance. Maestro Paoletti directs with vigor and understanding, welding the production into a cohesive and effective whole. Excellent notes by Peter Hugh Reed and an Italian-English libretto complete one of the finest Italian opera offerings of the year. W.

Nicolai: Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (complete). (Sung in German). Irma Beilke, Lore Hoffmann (sopranos); Marie Luise Schilp (mezzo-soprano); Walter Ludwig (tenor); Georg Hann (baritone); Wilhelm Strienz, Hans Florian (bassos); with the Berlin Civic Opera Chorus and the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-214) \$17.85.

This, the second "complete" *Merry Wives of Windsor*, is a vast improvement, vocally, over its predecessor (*OC-OCLP-303) (TNR July '51). The casting here is excellent, and a rousing performance results. Although known primarily for its sparkling overture, there are many fine moments in the opera. The characteristic drinking song *Als Bublein klein* and Frau Fluth's formidable *Nun eilt herbei* are real gems. Equally fine, but in a different vein, are Fenton's romance *Horch die Lerche singt* and Anna's tuneful little aria *So schawb' ich dir*.

Sir John Falstaff is sung by Wilhelm Strienz. This is the Strienz of old, the sonorous bass, rich, resonant and round. The characterization is effective, too, and in good taste. Irma Beilke is outstanding as Frau Fluth. Her main aria *Nun eilt herbei* is very well sung and, with Marie Luise Schilp as Frau Reich, one has a pair of merry wives who are just that. Anne Reich, in the person of Lore Hoffmann, is vocally personable, sounding young and vivacious. Walter Ludwig is a capable Fenton, singing with ease and finesse. Herr Fluth and Herr Reich, Georg Hann and Hans Florian respectively, turn in performances that are well-nigh perfect.

With all this wealth of good voices and above average musical characterization it is disappointing to have to report that the recording is below average in quality. The highs are somewhat scrambled; there is a roughness about the whole job that is objectionable. Most of it can be removed, however, by cutting the treble down on reproducers equipped with such a control.

Arthur Rother's direction is well-paced and understanding. His orchestra (Radio Berlin) and chorus (Berlin Civic Opera) respond and play sensitively. A libretto is included. W.

Dvořák: Rusalka (complete). (Sung in German). Elfride Trötschel, Ruth Lape (sopranos); Helena Rott (contralto); Helmut Schindler (tenor); Gottlob Frick (basso); with the Dresden State Opera Chorus and the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Josef Keilberth. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-219) (\$17.85).

Rusalka was written in 1900, some four years before Dvořák's untimely death at the height of his powers. The first performance was on 31 March 1901. The opera never attained any degree of popularity in this country. Dvořák describes it as a "lyric fairy tale" which is a singularly apt description. The story, incidentally, is essentially the same one that Adam used in his *Giselle* and Puccini in *Le Villi*.

Urania, as usual, has selected a fine cast, headed by Elfride Trötschel, an uncommonly able soprano. In the title role she sings in superb fashion and is convincing throughout. Her first act aria *Du lieber Mond* is one of the most exquisitely moving portions of the score and is sung impeccably. In the closing duet she also rises to great heights. As the Prince, Helmut Schindler is competent. He is a German lyric tenor, not given to throaty voice production; and further he possesses a higher than average musical intelligence. Gottlob Frick, as the Water Sprite, again proves he is one of the foremost operatic basses of today. Others in the long cast are uniformly good. Josef Keilberth holds his forces together in superb style and the resulting performance is one that stresses the lyricism of the score which is well, for it is the element in which the opera's charm lies.

Good, if not always brilliant recording, is in evidence throughout. A libretto and notes are also supplied. W.

Verdi: Simon Boccanegra (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Antonietta Stella (soprano); Carlo Bergonzi (tenor); Paolo Silveri (baritone); Mario Petri, Walter Monachesi (bassos); ELAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1231) \$17.85.

Simon Boccanegra, a changling among Verdi's operas, has had a checkered history. A complete failure at its *première* on 12 March 1857, it was withdrawn by the composer and re-worked. The libretto was even more tangled than that of *Il Trovatore*; and this circumstance, coupled with the austere and sombre music, mitigated against its success. Verdi persuaded the reluctant Boito to revise the old libretto while he refurbished the music. Thus *Simon Boccanegra* had a second *première* at La Scala on 24 March 1881 with a star studded cast including Tamagno, Maurel and Edouard de Reszke. It was a great success, but it was fifty-one years before it reached the Metropolitan. The cast of the first performance there included Tibbett, Martinelli, Pinza and Maria Müller.

This recording features a uniformly excellent cast. Paolo Silveri is a very human Doge; the part is difficult from all angles and with the exception of a few wobbly top notes, Silveri covers himself with glory. Carlo Bergonzi sings well in the role of Gabriele Adorno, his main aria, *Cielo, pietoso rendela* is very effectively projected. He is a *roubusto* tenor with good singing habits. Amelia is sung by a newcomer to Cetra records, Maria Antoinetta Stella, a good dramatic soprano. The *Garden Scene* is her high spot, but throughout the opera her performance is notable for its sincerity and absence of mannerisms. Mario Petri as Jacopo Fiesco is a fine artist, but one could wish for a bigger voice, especially for the famous *Il lacerato spirito*. The orchestra under Molinari-Pradelli, does yeoman work. The recording is good, with excellent balance between singers and orchestra.

Simon Boccanegra is not by any stretch of the imagination a popular opera, but one suspects that it will be more successful on records when a libretto will help keep things straight and where repeated hearings will reveal many beauties that might pass unnoticed in the opera house. W.

VOCAL



Planquette: Les Cloches de Corneville ("The Chimes of Normandy") (abridged operetta). (Sung in French). Soloists with the Raymond St.-Paul Chorus and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20100) \$5.95.

Lecocq: La Fille de Madame Angot (abridged operetta). (Sung in French). Soloists with the Raymond St.-Paul Chorus and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20000) \$5.95.

Planquette (1848-1903) and Lecocq (1832-1918) were both composers of light opera, followers of Offenbach. As is so often the case, the successors have everything but the genius of the model. The immortal Offenbach was, indisputably, the greatest master of this genre and anything coming after is almost certain to be in the nature of an anti-climax.

Les Cloches de Corneville, known to English audiences as *The Chimes of Normandy*, has long been a popular favorite. It was first produced in 1877 at the Folies Dramatiques and appeared in London in less than a year. The cast in this abridged performance is an excellent one and features such fine singers as Michel Dens, Martha Angelici, Jean Peyron and Nadine Renaux. The chorus and orchestra under Jules Gressier enter into the spirit of the affair and make the performance an enjoyable one.

La Fille de Mme. Angot is another work of the same type, light, frothy and enjoyable. It was introduced to the public in 1872 at the Théâtre Parisiennes in Brussels. It has not achieved the popularity

outside France that Planquette's work has. The cast here is also first-rate, for in addition to Messrs. Dens and Peyron there are Solange Michel and Lina Dachary. The same orchestra and chorus under the same conductor do yeoman work and the results are equally fine.

There is one serious drawback, however. Vox has neglected to supply more than the merest outline of the plot. No texts are given and the use of a narrator to hold the works together would be all right, but he speaks in French! This expedient is thus rendered useless for the great majority of Americans.

The recording is uniformly good on both discs and for those whose tastes lean toward operetta both items are worthy of investigation. W.

Mahler: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen ("Songs of a Wayfarer"). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1627) \$2.83. Coupled with **Songs of Hugo Wolf**. (TNR Sept. '50). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1203) \$5.72.

Mendelssohn: Duets for Soprano and Alto. (Sung in German). Jean Carlton (soprano) and Margaret Tobias (alto) accompanied by Paul Ulanowski (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-118) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Ich wollt' meine Lieb'; Abschiedslied der Zugvogel; Gruss; Herbstlied; O sah' ich auf der Haide dort; Maiglöckchen und die Blümlein; Sonntagmorgen; Das Ahrenfeld; Lied aus Ruy Blas; Wie kann ich froh und lustig sein; Abendlied; Wasserfahrt.*

A new recording of Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* makes its appearance this month in a stunning recording by RCA Victor. The sumptuousness of the technical job at times overshadows Miss Thebom's carefully considered performance.

These four songs, dating from 1883, are similar in text to Müller's *Winterreise* poems—that is, they are songs of unhappy unrequited love. Miss Thebom sings, as always, in exquisite fashion; but here she does not seem able to get into the spirit of the work, and one has the feeling that Miss Thebom the person is quite happy while Miss Thebom the singer is trying, unsuccessfully, to be sad, morbid and introspective.

Sir Adrian Boult and an anonymous orchestra provide accompaniments that are deftly fashioned and beautifully played. The coupling with the eight Wolf *Lieder* is a happy one. Texts and translations for all songs have been provided.

In direct contrast to the foregoing is a collection of Mendelssohn's duets as recorded by M-G-M. These salon pieces, while of small musical moment, are charming and were, one imagines, immensely popular in the mid-nineteenth century. Mmes. Carleton and Tobias, both possessors of fine lyric voices, sing their way through these twelve duets in fine style and with evident enjoyment. The fare is light but is also a pleasant change from the tragic and

exhibitionist outbursts of many of the romantic and post-romantic composers. Good recording and English texts have been supplied. W.

Italian Songs of the 16th and 17th Centuries. (Sung in Italian and French). Magda Laszlo (soprano) accompanied by Franz Holletschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5119) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Partenza amorosa and Lasciatemi morire* (Monteverdi); *Tutto acceso a quei rai* (Scarlatti); *Amarilli* (Caccini); *Vittoria! Vittoria!* (Carissimi); *Quella fiamma che m'accende* (Marcello); *Fuor dalle placid'onde* and *Posate dormite* (Bassani); *Se tu m'ami* (Pergolesi); *Itorno all' idol mio* (Cesti); *Chanson de papillon* (Campra).

Music for Soprano and Orchestra by Haydn. Gertraud Hopf (soprano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Meinhard von Zallinger. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSLP-2045) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Cantilena pro Adventu; Aria di Lindora; Aria di Errisena; Scena di Berenice; The Russian aria.*

Magda Laszlo, a young soprano of Italo-Hungarian extraction, makes an impressive recording début in this collection of old Italian arias and songs. The choice of material is to be commended and her performance is impeccable. Vocally, she can be classed as a lyrico-dramatic soprano, and she sings with intelligence and telling effect. There is a warm, vibrant quality about it that invests all she sings with an emotional flavor that is as interesting as it is unusual.

Many of the songs that have been recorded here were also made by the incomparable Gigli (*Amarilli; Vittoria! Vittoria!; Quella fiamma; Intorno all' idol mio* and *Posate, dormite*) and it is to Miss Laszlo's credit that she does not suffer in the least by comparison—she tops Gigli in the *Carissimi* song. This record can be recommended without reserve, for it will interest all types and classes of music lovers. The recording is Westminster at its best, and the texts of all the songs are supplied.

Curiously enough, but obviously of another world, are the *Five Arias for Soprano* by Josef Haydn. They are the logical outgrowth of much of the music on the Laszlo disc but the change—the growth in the internal structure and content of the music—is astonishing. Gertraud Hopf is a dramatic soprano who is also a musician. The music here makes demands on both aspects of her art—demands that she meets successfully. Perhaps the most formidable aria is the *Scena di Berenice* written to one of Metastasio's hair-raising texts. The music is almost as blood-curdling as the words, and Miss Hopf is artist enough to make the whole affair credible. The other arias, while not so difficult technically, are of considerable musical interest. The Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Meinhard von Zallinger plays expert accompaniments and the Haydn Society engineers have made an excellent recording from a technical

angle. The usual intelligent commentary and complete texts of the arias have also been included.

W.

Les Compagnons de la Chanson. Les Compagnons de la Chanson. 1-10" disc (*C-CL-6208) \$3.

The male ensemble known as Les Compagnons de la Chanson came over from France with the celebrated *chanteuse*, Edith Piaf. This group made such a hit that very soon they appeared in concerts of their own—they were a smash hit on Ed Sullivan's TV show. The present LP disc contains eight of their most popular numbers headed by the song for which they are particularly famous, *Les trois cloches* (The Three Bells). The other selections are: *Whirlwind*; *Whiffenpoof Song*; *Ave Maria*; *The Lonesome Sailor*; *Sweet Marie*; *Cry of the Wild Goose*; and *Dreams Never Grow Old*. All of these songs are sung in English except the *Whiffenpoof Song*, which is sung in French. If you are not familiar with the unique renditions of this unusual choral group, we suggest that you ask to hear this record when you next visit your record dealer's shop. The chances are that you may become fascinated with their singing as so many other thousands have since their first appearance in the U.S.A.

Beethoven Songs. (Sung in German and Italian).

Alfred Poell (bass-baritone) accompanied by Victor Graef (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5124) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *An die ferne Geliebte*; *Der Wachtelschlag*; *Adelaide*; *In questa tomba*; *Lied aus der Ferne*; *Wonne der Wehmuth*; *Ich liebe dich*; *Mailied*; *Der Küss*.

This is one of the finest LP discs issued to date. Regardless of the angle from which it is approached, it is a top-flight job.

Are you interested in *lieder*? Here is a sampling of Beethoven's best efforts in the form, including the incomparable cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* and the ever-popular *Adelaide*. They are sung with rare intelligence and expression. Herr Poell is so familiar with his material that he can devote thought and care to conveying the meaning and atmosphere.

Are you interested in expert singing? These songs give the singer ample opportunity to demonstrate a type of vocalism that is all too rarely heard these days. Perfect method coupled with a large bass voice (the kind that seems to purr!) lend an almost unreal quality to this disc. Throughout a range that extends well into the baritone register, Alfred Poell's voice is even, no excessive vibrato; no mannerisms mar his singing. As an example of artistry, hear *Der Küss*. Beethoven was not noted for a sense of humor and in this song he almost pounds the listener on the back so there will be no mistaking the somewhat silly point of the text "... did she scream? Oh yes, long after ... a long time after she screamed ... etc." Alfred Poell tones much of this foolishness down and the little arietta emerges in charming

fashion.

Are you interested in fine recording? Westminster engineers have done an extremely able job not only in capturing the timbre of the soloist's voice and its varying colors but in recording the accompanist as an equal—a partner—with the result that the recital is real.

Certainly this is a record for all lovers of music—one would have to go a long way to find something comparable. The previous recording of *An die ferne Geliebte* on Mercury (TNR Feb. '49) is just not in the running.

W.

A Schubert-Haydn Song Recital. (Sung in German and English). Tii Niemela (soprano) accompanied by Pentti Koskimies (piano). 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-10) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Dithyrambe*, Op. 60, No. 2; *Lachen und Weinen*, Op. 59, No. 4; *Du liebst mich nicht*, Op. 59, No. 1; *Ihr Bild*; *Das Wirtshaus*; *Auf dem Wasser zu singen*, Op. 72; *Nacht und Träume*, Op. 43, No. 2—Schubert. *Das Leben ist ein Traum*; *The mermaid's song*; *She never told her love*; *A pastoral song*; *The spirit's song*—Haydn.

A Camilla Williams Recital. Camilla Williams (soprano) accompanied by Borislav Bazala (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-140) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Beau soir* (Debussy); *Si tu le veux* (Koechlin); *Eglogue* and *Que l'heure est donc brève* (Delibes); *Si tu m'ami* (Malipiero); *Crepuscolo* and *Pioggia* (Respighi); *Yarmouth Fair*; *When I bring you color'd toys* (Carpenter); *The K'e* (Dougherty).

Two young sopranos compete for attention on this month's list. Both have appeared on records before; Miss Niemela in songs by Grieg, Sibelius and Kilpinen (TNR Sept. '51) and Miss Williams in an abridged *Aida* (TNR June '51). These two new records only serve to reinforce the opinion expressed at that time—that both singers are gifted far above the ordinary.

Tii Niemela presents another *lieder* recital, this time Schubert and Haydn. The songs by Schubert are well chosen, familiar ones intermixed with some less well known. All are exquisitely sung and one is hard put to choose the outstanding, but certainly the singing in *Das Wirtshaus* and *Nacht und Träume* is as fine as can be heard on records. Miss Niemela seems to realize, as did Gerhard Hüsch before her, that for the proper "... delivery of Schubert's songs ... neither the Italian or quasi-Italian lyrical style nor the melodious enunciation of the words is in itself sufficient; the ideal delivery for his songs lies somewhere between the two, with alternate emphasis on each." (Einstein). The Haydn songs, while they lack the absorbing musical interest of the Schubert works, are none the less beautifully projected. The accompaniments supplied by Pentti Koskimies are polished and blend with the soloist in a manner that many singers would envy.

Miss Williams' choice of material is more diversified. The selection ranges through French, Italian

and American songs and although the songs are of somewhat uneven musical merit, the vocalism is of a uniformly high order. Camilla Williams is young, but her understanding of the material and the manner in which she uses her glorious voice are those of a mature artist.

The recording in both discs is excellent and the modest price of the M-G-M record puts it into the best buy category.

W.

PIANO



Complete Piano Music of Ravel (Vol. I). Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4518) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Pavane pour une infante défunte*; *A la manière de Emanuel Chabrier*; *A la manière de Borodine—Valse*; *Sonatine*; *Mirrors*.

Complete Piano Music of Ravel (Vol. II). Robert and Gaby Casadesus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4519) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Ma mère l'Oye*; *Habañera*; *Jeu d'eau*; *Gaspard de la nuit*; *Menuet antique*.

Complete Piano Music of Ravel (Vol. III). Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4520) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Le tombeau de Couperin*; *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; *Prelude in A minor (1913)*; *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn*.

Ravel: Mirrors. One side, and **Ravel: Gaspard de la nuit.** Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8152) \$4.98.

To the student and the music lover recordings are becoming more and more important. The three Columbia LP discs listed above tend to emphasize this point quite dramatically. Here we have all of Ravel's piano music (three lesser works, one of which is unpublished and two of which were composed for musical magazines are omitted) on three LP discs played by the composer's colleague who appeared with him on the concert platform many times over a period of some eight years. All of this great music takes up less than a half-inch on the shelf of your record cabinet and is there for you to study or enjoy whenever you are in the mood. We take so much for granted these days that we cannot resist occasionally pointing out the great cultural value of recorded music.

We rather believe that most critics will have nothing but the highest praise for Robert Casadesus' renditions of Ravel's works for solo piano and that they will equally approve of the recordings for piano four hands in which this fine artist is joined by his wife, Gaby.

For those who are interested only in the selections, *Miroirs* and *Gaspard de la nuit*, excellent recordings of them by the fine pianist, Leonard Pennario, will be found on the Capitol disc listed above.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in C, Op. 2, No. 3.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9593) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp, Op. 78** and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 25 in G, Op. 79.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9578) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9579) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 28 in A, Op. 101.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9581) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9580) \$5.85.

The great German pianist, Wilhelm Kempff, is known in America because of his many recordings which have appeared in our catalogs. Decca is doing a fine service by making the present recordings that were made for Deutsche Grammophon available on LP discs. Kempff is considered by many critics to be the greatest living interpreter of Beethoven's piano works and thus it is very probable that there will be a keen interest in these recordings, especially by students and those music lovers who like their Beethoven played in the orthodox German tradition.

Decca has achieved highly satisfactory reproduction but some of the surfaces of the samples sent us are not quite as smooth and quiet as we would like them.

Rachmaninoff: Variations on a Theme of Chopin, Op. 22. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Op. 42.** Bernhard Weiser (piano). 1-12" disc (*RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS-4) \$5.95.

Rachmaninoff: Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Op. 42. One side, and **Villa-Lobos: (6) Pieces for Piano.** Bernardo Segall (piano). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-404) \$4.85.

We rather think that we would have passed by these discs without listing them except for the fact that the music that they contain is not otherwise available on LP records. While none of the three pieces is of any great importance we feel under obligation to keep readers informed of what classical music has been recorded. Both of the pianists are worthy of being recorded—especially Bernhard Weiser, whose several very successful recitals in New York have gained for him many admirers—but the reproduction accorded them is so poor that we cannot honestly recommend either of these discs. If you would like to have recordings of these selections or

of these artists, we suggest that you listen to the records before you purchase them.

Schubert: (8) Impromptus, Op. 90 and Op. 142. Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-M-L-4527) \$5.45.

Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 142. Miklos Schwalb (piano). 1-10" disc (*ACADEMY ALP-306) \$4.75.

Certainly anyone would be foolish not to select the Firkusny disc that contains the eight Impromptus that are contained in Opera 90 and 142 rather than the Schwalb disc that only contains the four in Opus 142—twice as much delightful music for less than a dollar more. Also we are sorry to report that, while Miklos Schwalb is a fine pianist, his recording is marred by poor reproduction; thus we cannot recommend his recording.

Bach: (6) Partitas. Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-303) \$18.78.

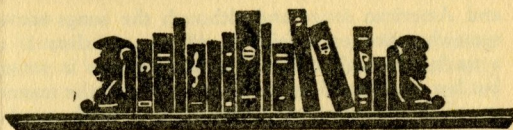
Here we have a fine set of recordings of Bach's (6) Partitas, which make up the first volume of his famous *Clavierübung*. They are beautifully played by the young Austrian pianist, Paul Badura-Skoda. This brilliant young artist graduated from the Vienna College of Music in 1949. In the summers of 1948 and 1950 he studied with Edwin Fischer and has appeared successfully at the Bach Festival in Vienna and the Salzburg Festival.

With this excellent album is included a miniature score of the Six Partitas and copious notes by the celebrated American music critic, Irving Kolodin.

Debussy: (12) Etudes. Charles Rosen (piano). 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-6) \$5.95.

Debussy: (12) Etudes. Monique Haas (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9599) \$5.85.

It is good to have these twelve difficult and extremely interesting little pieces available in recorded form. Whether we need two versions of them is surely a question, but here they are and one may make his choice. One version is by the American pianist, Charles Rosen, a student of Moriz Rosenthal and Robert Casadesu and presently an instructor in Romance Languages at Princeton University; the other is by the distinguished French pianist, Monique Haas, a graduate of the Paris Conservatoire where she studied with Cortot's successor, Lazare-Levi. Miss Haas is considered one of Europe's most brilliant performers of modern music for the piano. We rather prefer her recording of these Etudes, but we are sure that there are many who will not agree with us; we suggest that you hear both discs before making your choice.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Collosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricard, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 @ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 5

JULY, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THE great success of the first two volumes of recordings made under the auspices of the Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University has prompted this distinguished organization to issue a supplementary single 10-inch 78 rpm unbreakable disc called "Florida Bird Songs." The price of this record is \$2.63, and it contains recordings of the songs of some ten birds to be found in that state.

As in the previous volumes, the birds were recorded in their natural haunts and the time and miles of travel necessary to obtain these unique recordings must have been considerable. A sound truck was used for this work and the original recordings were made on 16 mm. film. The film was edited in the laboratory and transferred to a recording disc, at which time an announcer inserted some interesting identifying data. The whole is a fine piece of work and Cornell should be justly proud of the results attained.

The first two volumes are still available. American Bird Songs (Vol. I) contains 6-10" 78 rpm discs in album and the price is \$8.93. American Bird Songs (Vol. II) contains 5-12" 78 rpm discs in album, priced at \$11.03.

If your local dealer does not stock these records, orders sent to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

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NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of

these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.)

ORCHESTRA



Prokofiev: Symphony No. 6, in E-flat, Op. 11. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-527) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: The Love for Three Oranges, Op. 33a—Suite. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Prokofiev: Russian Overture, Op. 72.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Steinkopf. 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5005) \$4.75.

The grand old man of the podium, Ernest Ansermet, is back again with one of his famous readings of contemporary music. His statement of the Prokofiev *Sixth Symphony* is another masterpiece in a long line of outstanding performances by this great conductor. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is surprisingly good and must be ranked with the world's best orchestras. Ansermet is never one to over-emphasize anything nor drive the music too hard. His readings are always honest, forthright, clear, and faithful to the score; yet they are never lifeless or lacking in interest. He has a complete grasp of the *Sixth*, evident in the lucidity and clarity of line at all times. There is also a complete portrayal of the emotional content, with Ansermet's flair for color always in evidence. It is a magnificent performance from a man with a great mind and a warm heart too. London has supplied fine reproduction to complete the picture.

Another recording of the *Sixth* on LP, by Ormandy and the Philadelphians (*CML-4328) is one of estimable merit. It has more muscular power at times, for Ormandy summons a lot of power and weight whenever possible. We found the over-all conception of these men somewhat different. Ansermet appears to be probing the score and revealing everything possible in it, in a pattern of utmost clarity. Ormandy has more flair for climaxes and stunning effects. If you are seriously interested in the music, you may find one preferable to the other; we would suggest Ansermet as a more fine-grained job.

The other Prokofiev disc listed above is a good, competent disc, but it is outclassed by Capitol (*P-8149), which for a few cents more, offers on the reverse a performance of the suite from *Lieutenant Kije*, both done by Roger Désormière. Both discs offer the same six sections of *The Love for Three*

Oranges Suite, and *Désormière* has the better of it for performance, orchestra, and reproduction. The *Russian Overture* on the *Urania* disc is a mediocre work of mild interest, certainly not to be compared to *Lieutenant Kije*. Therefore we recommend the Capitol on all counts. S.

Goldmark: Symphony, Op. 26 ("Rustic Wedding"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1138) \$5.95.

Carpenter: Adventures in a Perambulator. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One and one-half sides, and **Contemporary American Violin Music.** Louis Kaufman (violin) accompanied by Anette Kaufman (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1140) \$5.95.

All of this music appears for the first time on LP discs, and also appears for the first time in quite a long while in modern reproduction. Both of the orchestral works are worthy pieces of much charm, if not major items of the repertoire. The Vienna State Opera Orchestra is generally a pretty fine outfit, but in the Goldmark symphony they indulge in some ragged playing not up to their usual standard. Their precision improves a bit as the work progresses; and if you do not notice their inaccuracies in the first movement, you will not be annoyed. We dare say that any first line American orchestra plays better, and certainly records for posterity better. The V.S.O. is much better in the Carpenter *Adventures*, and Swoboda gives an idiomatic reading which could stand a bit more unbending and point to the humor in the score. Kaufman's playing of the American music is splendid; the disc includes these five pieces: *Aria and Toccata in Swing* (Robert McBride), *Blues and Here's One* (William Grant Still), and *Hoe Down and Ukulele Serenade* (Aaron Copland). Throughout both of these discs we have the very finest of reproduction, a joy indeed.

Goldmark's *Rustic Wedding Symphony* is the last word in joyful, pleasant, sweet, melodious music. It is just as much a suite as a symphony, discarding the abstract form of the classical symphony in favor of a programmatic shape. Its five movements are drawn from Goldmark's own rural experiences and breathes the life and the people he knew. Swoboda gives a lovely reading which fully reveals all the delicacy and grace of this charming music.

Carpenter's *Adventures in a Perambulator* is a completely programmatic work (and the program is fully outlined on the cover notes) which is in a lighter vein than most of his music. His music was mainly intellectual—musical settings of poems by such writers as Blake, Yeats, Sassoon, and the Chinese poets. In this work, there is an array of sounds used to depict the adventures of a baby in the course of his day in a perambulator. Much credit goes to the composer for not making this a silly round of sound effects, but rather a fine musical composition—

just as *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is good music as well as being descriptive. S.

R. Strauss: Symphonica Domestica, Op. 53. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-483) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra. Erich Ertel (oboe) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **R. Strauss: Concerto in D minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 8.** Siegfried Borries (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7032) \$5.95.

The "*Domestic*" Symphony was recently issued on LP with the composer himself conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in a concert performance of eight years ago. The present disc will appeal more widely on the basis of better reproduction, although those seriously interested in this work may well prefer to have the composer's own interpretation. Krauss, a good Strauss conductor, plays the work magnificently, and has a keen feeling for the peculiar situations described in this symphony. It is always a source for argument whether this symphony is worth while or whether it is a lot of nonsense. We can only advise that it has much characteristic of Strauss in it, but is not among his best canvases by a good deal.

The *Violin Concerto*, written when Strauss was seventeen years old, is in three movements, and has all the ingredients that most concerto lovers will welcome. After hearing it, we had the feeling that it was nice to have listened to this rather than to another version of the Bruch, Tchaikovsky, or Mendelssohn—not that it is as great a work as those, but it is refreshing for a change. Siegfried Borries tosses it off in capital fashion—plenty of dash, bravura, and breadth. He has a fine tone and good technique.

The *Oboe Concerto* was completed in 1945, four years before the composer's death. It shows a sure hand of vast experience, including a thorough knowledge and feeling for the oboe as a solo instrument. It is scored for two flutes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and strings. There is good form to the work and it has melodious appeal. We did not feel that it is a work of major importance, but it is probably notable among recent works for solo oboe. Erich Ertel plays a characteristic German-style oboe of rich, rather thick tone; his phrasing and technique are admirable. Rother accompanies both works extremely well, and the reproduction is very fine. S.

Massenet: Scènes Pittoresques. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Concert Piece for Harp and Orchestra, Op. 154.** Jeannette Helmlis (harp) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinz Mahlke. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7039) \$5.95.

The *Scènes Pittoresques* here receives what

amounts to its first recording, for any previous ones—or even excerpts—are faded and jaded old ones, not familiar to most of today's record collectors. The *Scènes Alsaciennes* is available in a fine recording by Mitropoulos (*C-ML-2074) and has proved enjoyable to many. The *Scènes Pittoresques* is an even more familiar work, as the "Angélus," with its tolling of bells, and the spirited "Fête Bohème" are played now and then in programs of lighter music. The other two movements are "Marche" and a waltz, "Air de Ballet." Altogether, the suite is a pleasing trifle that joins the hundred of other such pieces of music which aim to please with their melodies and sentimental flavoring. Ludwig leads a performance which is a decent compromise of dignity and sentiment, a fair statement of the score; it is nicely played by the orchestra and well recorded.

The Saint-Saëns work, never before recorded, was written in 1919 when the composer was 84 years old, and it constitutes a not inconsiderable addition to the very slim catalog of music for harp and orchestra. In form it is quite simple—a brief introduction presents an interchange of compliments between the solo instrument and the orchestra; this is succeeded by the three main sections of the piece—concerto movements in miniature. These sections, moderately fast, slow, and fast, are replete with the facile melodies which are so typical of Saint-Saëns, and the orchestration is no less typical in its smooth perfection of texture. Remarkably, however, there are few opportunities given the soloist for virtuosic fireworks, and the work lacks even a cadenza. Whether accidental or deliberate, this has no doubt helped militate against its popularity with harpists, who, no less than their ubiquitous brethren, the violinists and pianists, may be presumed to be heir to the human weakness for self-display. Jeannette Helms performs this work with graceful feeling, and receives complimentary support from the orchestra. This is no earth-shaking masterpiece, but it is a highly enjoyable affair in its own lightweight class.

S.

Roussel: Symphony No. 3 in G minor, Op. 42. Radio Leipzig Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. One side, and **Roussel: Bacchus et Ariane, Op. 43—Suite No. 2.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Rucht. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7037) \$5.95.

Roussel: Petite Suite, Op. 39. One side, and **Debussy: Petite Suite.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sergiu Celibidache. 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5006) \$4.75.

Toward the end of his career Roussel wrote his *Third Symphony* for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. At this point in his life he had undergone several changes in musical style; he had kept up with the times, so to speak. From an early life of principles along the lines of Franck and d'Indy, he went on to embrace impres-

sionism similar to Debussy and Ravel, and finally to practice the craft of the tonal radicals like Stravinsky, Honegger, Milhaud, Schönberg, and others. The *Third Symphony*, completed in 1930 when the composer was 61 years of age, is a beautiful composite of these styles, which results in a work that is not difficult to assimilate, and happily not too acid. There is more than a little poetry and beauty and impressionism in this symphony, and there is always fastidious workmanship. It has a continual driving force and is very compact with no extraneous material. We think it is mighty interesting and a fine work worthy of more frequent hearings. Borsamsky and the Radio Leipzig orchestra play a crisp and polished performance of the work which is well recorded.

The *Bacchus et Ariane Suite* is one of two orchestral suites drawn—one from each of the two acts—from a ballet written immediately after the *Third Symphony*. To a scenario based on classic Greek mythology, Roussel composed a ballet score of enormous invention with irresistible movement and force. The suite here presented is exhilarating listening—a fine performance by Rucht and the Radio Berlin orchestra. Here is a good coupling of two Roussel works which we can highly recommend.

Debussy's *Petite Suite* was originally written for piano, four hands, in 1889; the orchestral transcription was made by Henri Busser in 1909. The four movements are familiar: *En Bateau*, *Cortège*, *Menuet*, and *Ballet*. Roussel's *Petite Suite* is in three movements titled: *Aubade*, *Pastorale*, and *Masquerade*. It is a fitting companion in this LP coupling, and presents an interesting study of the two composers. The performances of both works is good with clear reproduction.

S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 3 in D, Op. 29 ("Polish"). Homburg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Shubert. 1-12" disc (*REGENT MG-5012) \$2.19.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 3 in D, Op. 29 ("Polish"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1139) \$5.95.

The Tchaikovsky *Third Symphony* may be entirely unfamiliar to you, but we are sure you can tell the difference between these two recordings. At any point in any movement you can tell a good orchestra under a good conductor such as we find in the Concert Hall disc from a most ordinary orchestra under a less skillful conductor such as we hear on the Regent disc. Regent also has a thin, nasal type of reproduction, while the Concert Hall sound is good and well balanced, with a nice orchestral timbre. The Regent disc is completely outclassed in every respect. And for the umpteenth time, we will again state our strong dislike for LP jackets that do not carry program notes or biographical information about the performing artists. Regent just leaves the

back of the jacket blank—and that is the way it leaves us.

The "Polish" Symphony of Tchaikovsky appears for the first time on LP lists, although it had several previous recordings on 78, including two good ones by Kindler and by Beecham. As you may know, the title "Polish" is derived from the last movement, Tempo di Polacca, a Polish dance that is a distantly related cousin of the Polonaise. But the symphony might as well have been called "German" after the third movement, which is entitled Alla tedesca. He is supposed to have written this work out of sympathy for the oppressed Poles; but this is less than likely, considering his national leanings. The symphony is in five movements; the second and fourth are dance movements, a waltz and Scherzo respectively. The work has power and real musical worth and is wholly enjoyable. While unlike the popular three which followed it, this one nevertheless is good Tchaikovsky of broad appeal. Swoboda plays the music with admirable insight and feeling and with firm control; the Vienna State Opera Orchestra does his bidding with a fine finish. In all it is a worthy addition to the recorded repertoire. S.

Handel: The Water Music (complete). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9594) \$5.85.

Handel: The Water Music—Suite. One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D—Air.** Pro Arte Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-132) \$3.

The MGM disc is not in the same class as the Decca disc. Marrow gets off to a heavy start and does the whole thing in a manner all too prevalent today: slow, thick, and with a romantic sweep entirely foreign to this score. Ormandy does the same thing in his recording. None of these "suite of excerpts" versions can begin to efface the memory of the original old Hamilton Harty version made a few decades ago for Columbia.

There are now two complete versions, the other one having been issued a short time ago by WCFM discs (*LP-2) and played by the National Gallery Orchestra of Washington, D. C., under Richard Bales (TNR Feb. '51). It was the first complete version and a mighty welcome one. It is now relegated to second place, for this new disc by the Berlin Philharmonic under Lehmann is absolutely magnificent. It is probably the finest thing in *Water Music* recordings ever issued. For once we have a crack orchestra whose horns and trumpets can sail through the difficult high writing with ease. Accorded fine reproduction, the technical end is thus cared for brilliantly. Lehmann uses the edition prepared by Freidrich Chrysander for the German Handel Society in 1886. The sound of a harpsichord is in evidence through many sections and adds a lot to the general effect. The prevailing feeling in this performance is one of gaiety and light, buoyant, airiness, com-

pletely appropriate to this music. Never one to encourage fast tempos or applaud a performance because it sets a new high for fast tempos, we do find Lehmann's brisk reading part of the wonderful effect he creates. The whole rendition is just delightful from the very first bar until the last. This is one disc we wholeheartedly feel belongs in every collection; anyone is a happier soul for having heard it. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. One side, and **Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Incidental Music.** N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4498) \$5.45.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7508) \$3.85.

The Szell performance of the *Italian Symphony* was previously issued in another coupling which is now withdrawn in favor of this more logical coupling with a new recording of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. The sections included in this suite are: Overture, Scherzo, Intermezzo, Nocturne, and Wedding March, giving us the usual four plus the lovely Intermezzo, but leaving out several wonderful sections which have been included in other LP versions. Columbia has labeled the record wrongly; the Intermezzo follows the Scherzo. There are two other notably good recordings of this music, one by Ferenc Fricsay and the Berlin Philharmonic (*D-DL-8516) and one by Toscanini and the NBC (*V-LM-1221) coupled with Debussy's *La Mer*. Our preference of all LP's of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is the Fricsay; he seems to have a lighter touch with the music than any of the others, although portions of the Toscanini are pretty fine, which can also be said of the Szell and Krauss discs. But for an all around good job, Fricsay is about as close to perfection as we have heard in this music.

Szell and Rieger each have a different approach to the *Italian Symphony* (despite the fact that Rieger studied with Szell at the Prague Conservatory). Szell sails into this work with the vigor of Koussevitzky and others who take this at strictly high voltage "as fast as possible" tempi. Rieger does not give the effect of taking it slowly, but he has a more relaxed way and achieves greater clarity and definition. We prefer the reproduction Decca offers; it is more resonant and sweeter in tone than Columbia achieved in Cleveland. There are two other good performances of this work: Koussevitzky (*V-LM-20) and Klemperer (*VX-PL-6980) both of which have merit—on the brisk side.

The choice of couplings may influence you in the various versions of the works we have discussed; but if this is not a consideration, you will find Decca can fill the bill quite well for both works: Fricsay for the *Midsummer* music and Rieger for the *Italian*. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50003) \$5.95.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95

("From the New World"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50002) \$5.95.

Mercury has issued some new LP's demonstrating their latest technique of recording, using a single Telefunken microphone and other carefully planned devices in the processing to the final record. The results are good, and whether they match or exceed the best that several other major companies achieve, your own ears and equipment will tell you. We think Mercury is putting out a disc which fairly competes with the best as far as reproduction is concerned.

Kubelik and the Chicago Symphony have recorded several works for Mercury, but the outstanding one on all counts is the *New World Symphony*. Kubelik brings a freshness to the work that is thrilling and realizes beautiful effects time and time again. Most persons will find this a great listening experience. The competitive versions include several strong entries: Ormandy-Philadelphia and Stokowski. Ormandy's reading may wear better over a long time with some of us, and the Philadelphians have no peer in this type of music. You will be able to determine whether you prefer Ormandy or Kubelik before you have finished the first movement, and which reproduction pleases you more.

The Tchaikovsky *Fourth* has been "interpreted" to death; Kubelik is one of the interpreters, but not the best of them. Ormandy has the best reading of this work on LP, with plenty of drive and power, but not exaggerated details. Kleiber also has a pretty straight performance, somewhat lacking in profile. Koussevitzky appeals to those who want it laid on thicker, and the Boston Orchestra aids him in this task. Kubelik would place, in our opinion, somewhere after Ormandy and before or beside Koussevitzky. Here again, the quality of reproduction may aid you in deciding which version you want permanently, for Kubelik's recording will sound fine on a good amplifier. In both these symphonies, we would advise comparing Kubelik with Ormandy, and of course, Mercury with Columbia for pleasant reproduction. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G ("Surprise"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 33 in B-flat, K. 319.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-491) \$5.95.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-490) \$5.95.

The Haydn-Mozart disc is done according to present-day practice, a rather thick and romanticized reading. It sounds like a full complement of strings

are used. We believe these readings will appeal to a majority of record buyers, and they will get good reproduction as well as appealing performances of both works. The Mozart No. 33 is not one of the best known, but it is ever gay and vivacious, simple and lovely, with an especially nice Minuet. Weisbach and the Bamberg Symphony recorded it (*ME-MG-10077) and von Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic did it also (*C-ML-4370), but neither have as attractive a coupling, nor are their performances appreciably better. The Haydn "Surprise" has, of course, been recorded many times. Beecham has a splendid version (*C-ML-4453) coupled with the Haydn "Drum Roll." Other versions have no more to offer than either Beecham or the current Van Beinum. Van Beinum presses the work a bit for severe classicists; most persons will find it an expressive performance and a rich-toned one.

Van Beinum and London were both very much off the beam when they did the Brahms *First*. This is a completely incompetent performance and is not very well recorded. The tone is somewhat distant and cloudy, and is not comparable to the superb sound Columbia achieved in the recent Ormandy-Philadelphia disc of the same work (*C-ML-4477). Van Beinum gets off to a fair start in the first few moments of the first movement, and thereafter everything that happens is just plain annoying. He indulges in extreme vagaries of tempo for no apparent reason, and seems to have no fixed conviction about the work in general. His reading of the glorious final movement is about the poorest we have ever heard, the last few moments are particularly terrible. There are many fine versions of this work on LP: the Ormandy disc noted above, Keilberth and the Berlin Philharmonic, Stokowski and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, and the Weingartner reissue. Our recommendation is the Ormandy disc for first choice. S.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-489) \$5.95.

Berlioz: Les Troyens a Carthage—Suite. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-127) \$3.

Berlioz' masterpiece, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, now boasts four LP recordings, all of which have solid merit. Monteux is widely heralded for his reading of this work (*V-LM-1131) and we found the Paray performance very fine (*VX-PL-6950). Recently Columbia issued one by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4467) which we thought the best to date. It is still the best taking this newest one into consideration. Ormandy performs the music as well as any of the others, with a truly admirable and valid interpretation. Columbia has recorded the *Fantastique* better than any of the

others, including the new London disc. London's reproduction is excellent, and in spots possibly better than Columbia, but for the over-all quality and timbre, Columbia has a recording that sets a mighty high mark for to exceed. Were it not for the Ormandy disc, this Van Beinum effort would probably be tops, but it must take second place in our opinion. If you have any doubts about which to select, both are worth your time to compare.

Jean Martinon has done some excellent recording lately, and one of his best efforts is this little MGM disc containing the Overture, Royal Hunt and Storm, Ballet Music, and Trojan March from Berlioz' *The Trojans at Carthage*. This suite from the opera contains some of Berlioz' most inspired and effective music. It is powerful writing that has a great impact. Martinon carries it off successfully, and the reproduction is quite good. We can recommend this disc highly to those interested in investigating Berlioz' music.

S.

Rangström: Symphony No. 1 in C-sharp minor.

Stockholm Concert Association Orchestra conducted by Tor Mann 1-12" disc (*L-LL-514) \$5.95.

This work is sub-titled "August Strindberg in memoriam." Strindberg was "the flaming torch of Swedish literature," as the composer himself called him. Strindberg died in 1912, and in 1914 Rangström, then in his thirties, completed his first symphony. Among the comments the composer has made on this work is the statement that the fact that the symphony is dedicated to Strindberg is the extent of its connection with that writer: the dedication is only an expression of gratitude. Rangström did not care to be a program composer, but wished merely to make the symphony an emotional experience. The four movements, Ferment, Legend, Troll Rune, and Battle, touch the imaginative worlds of Strindberg, but the content is the composer's.

Ture Rangström occupies a unique position amongst the more prominent Swedish composers of this century on account of the individuality of his style and the burning originality of his genius. He was largely self-taught; he did not bother much with counterpoint and other academic studies, being probably guided by an instinct that such things did not exactly go with the music within him. His style greets us like a mighty fresco, powerfully inspired, vividly and suggestively imaginative, with a dark, masculine pathos, but also a radiant and strongly personal poetry.

You will not find this music hard to understand; it is not discordant or unpleasantly dissonant. There is so much drive to it that the listener is immediately carried away and caught in the stream of music until its conclusion. Anyone interested in new works will be well rewarded for investigating this symphony. It is played with obvious sympathy and devotion by Tor Mann and the Stockholm Orchestra, and competently reproduced.

S.

Stokowski Conducts Percy Grainger Favorites. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra with Percy Grainger (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1663) \$3.99.

CONTENTS: *Country Gardens; Shepherd's Hey; Molly on the Shore; Mock Morris; Early One Morning; Handel in the Strand; Irish Tune from County Derry (Londonderry Air).*

Stokowski Conducts Grainger and Other Favorites.

Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra with Percy Grainger (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1238) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Country Gardens; Shepherd's Hey; Molly on the Shore; Mock Morris; Early One Morning; Handel in the Strand; Irish Tune from County Derry (Londonderry Air) (Grainger). Prelude in E minor, Op. 28, No. 4 and Prelude in D minor, Op. 28, No. 24 (Chopin); Berceuse and Valse Triste (Sibelius); Tyrolean Dances (Schubert); German Dance No. 3, K. 605 ("Sleigh Ride") (Mozart).*

The selections other than the Grainger pieces have appeared previously on single records, thus the main interest is in the partnership of Grainger and Stokowski in recording the so-called "Percy Grainger Favorites." We don't know who thought up the idea, but we do know that Stokowski has always been interested in Grainger's little pieces, most of which are based on British or Irish folk melodies; and we also know that the results are excellent. We thoroughly enjoyed these sprightly little works with their gay rhythms; we believe that you will find them quite fascinating, too.

Stokowski selected an appropriately small orchestra of excellent players and with the composer at the piano produced a series of perfectly splendid renditions.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 6 in A. Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by L. G. Jochum. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7041) \$5.95.

A little more than a year ago, Westminster issued the Bruckner Sixth on three LP sides, with the fourth side containing two Psalms, also by Bruckner. This performance was recorded by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Henry Swoboda. In the present set, we find L. G. Jochum, an old hand with Bruckner, directing a performance more volatile and more closely knit. There is a great deal of energy and enthusiasm in this reading. Everything moves along brightly, which is reasonable considering that the Sixth is brighter in spirit than some of the other Bruckner symphonies. Both conductors use the original definitive version of the symphony, published in the 1930's. As the reproduction is excellent in both sets, it would seem to be a choice of the Urania disc at half the price of the Westminster (*WL-5055/6) unless you also want the two Psalms. We would suggest the Urania as the better buy.

The *Sixth* is about the least played of all Bruckner's symphonies; it has been performed only a couple of times in this country. It is shorter than most of the others, it is less ponderous and more direct than some of the more popular symphonies of this composer. The principal themes of the *Sixth* are derived, for the most part, from the opening subject of the first movement, said by some to have been inspired by a certain Austrian military signal. The first movement, *Maestoso*, is rather forthright and dramatic for Bruckner, and includes some complex rhythmic combinations. The *Scherzo* is somewhat slower than usual in Bruckner's symphonies. Its contrasting middle section is of special interest; it combines pizzicato chords in the strings with music for three horns—as in Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony—and the woodwinds quote the principal theme from the first movement of Bruckner's Fifth Symphony. As usual with Bruckner, if you like his music and look hard enough, you will find much of interest and be amply rewarded with some grand music. S.

Marcello: Aria in A minor for Strings. And Cirri: Concerto in A for 'Cello, Flute and Strings. One side, and **Albinoni: Concerto in D, Op. 9, No. 7.** And **Pergolesi: Concerto No. 5 for Four Violins, Viola, 'Cello and Continuo.** Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9598) \$5.85.

The great success of the first three records (*D-DL-9575 and *D-DL-9572, TNR May '52, and *CE-50045, TNR Sept. '51) by the Virtuosi di Roma makes it only necessary for us to announce and list another in the series of recordings of this unique and outstanding musical organization. If you found the earlier recordings of interest, it is a certainty that you will at least wish to hear this new release.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. One side, and **Verdi: Aida—Prelude and Ballet Music.** Metropolitan Opera Association Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4515) \$5.45.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. One side, and **Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9.** Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden) conducted by Hugo Rignold. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9548) \$5.85.

All of the music on these two LP discs is pretty familiar. We would say that it is a matter of personal taste as to whether you will prefer the Decca or the Columbia record. Both contain well played performances and both are blessed with fine reproduction.

In the Latin Flavor. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1639) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-162) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *The Continental; La Cumparsita; Carioca; Brazil; Jalousie; Malagueña; La Paloma; Ritual Fire Dance.*

The Boston Pops have cast their eyes toward our neighbors to the south and have come up with a

group of brilliant recordings of a lot of old favorites with a Latin flavor. We imagine many persons will be sipping their iced tea on the coming summer evenings to the accompaniment of these lively tunes as recorded by Mr. Fiedler.

Kern: Scenario for Orchestra on Themes from "Show Boat." One side, and **Rodgers—arr. Bennett: Scenario for Orchestra on Themes from "South Pacific" and Rodgers: Slaughter on Tenth Avenue.** Philadelphia Orchestra "Pops" conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4514) \$5.45.

It may be a novelty to have a big long-hair orchestra play musical comedy music and some folks may get a big kick out of it; but for ourselves, we'll take Kostelanetz's usual group of players.

Strauss Blue Danube Waltz. One side, and **Strauss: Tales from the Vienna Woods.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-13) \$2.85.

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op. 62. One side, and **Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-15) \$2.85.

This pair of LP discs contains a group of well-beloved selections that will provide a lovely concert for a warm summer evening. Ormandy presents them in a most attractive manner and they have been splendidly recorded.

R. Strauss: Divertimento after Couperin, Op. 86. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **R. Strauss: Taillefer, Op. 52.** Maria Cebotari (soprano); Walter Ludwig (tenor); Hans Hotter (baritone); with the Rudolf Lamy Choir and the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7042) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

Arensky: Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a. The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: The Miserly Knight—Act II.** Cesare Siepi (basso) with The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4526) \$5.45.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under OPERA.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slave, Op. 31** and **Mendelssohn: The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26** ("Fingal's Cave"). Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1647) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-164) \$4.67.

These brilliant orchestral pieces are just the sort of selections that the Boston Pops does extremely well. This fine orchestra makes the most of its oppor-

tunities on this LP disc and RCA Victor has supplied reproduction of high fidelity.

CONCERTO



MacDowell: Concerto No. 2 in D minor. Alexander Jenner (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. One and one-half sides, and **MacDowell: Woodland Sketches, Op. 51**—Selections. Arthur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1137) \$5.95.

MacDowell has not been blessed with too many recordings over the years; this is the second LP to be issued bearing his works. His *Second Concerto* is one of his most successful pieces, has been played widely in Europe and America, and still retains a measure of popularity. Being a pianist himself, MacDowell constructed a fine pianistic work which is everything we expect in a concerto. It is not without an abundance of the graceful melody so typical of this composer. MacDowell was a sincere composer with a personal message which always emerged in poetic music of choice harmony and pleasing melody. His background included twelve years study in Europe, and while at the Paris Conservatory he numbered Debussy among his fellow-students, revolting in much the same way as his sensitive contemporary against the rigors of academic music discipline. In 1888 he returned to the United States, and from then on, although he appeared in concert and taught at Columbia University, he devoted most of his time to composition. The *Second Concerto* was written in 1889, after he had found his own individualism as a composer, and is therefore a mature and characteristic work. Seven years later, in 1896, MacDowell published a series of pastoral idylls entitled *Woodland Sketches*, ten short piano pieces that contain all his love for nature and the outdoors. They remain perennial favorites with pianists today.

Alexander Jenner, who performs the concerto, is a promising young artist. He has a fine clear style, good tone, and a facile technique. He seems to have quite a feeling for this work, and gives it an exemplary reading, well companioned by Swoboda and the orchestra. The reproduction is excellent. Artur Balsam is a familiar artist of sterling taste; his playing of the *Sketches* is a model of competence. There is abundant grace, charm, and sweetness, but there is the requisite restraint to keep this music good and artistic. The piano tone is quite good here. In all it is a splendid disc. S.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in A-flat for Two Pianos and Orchestra. Orazio Frugoni and Annarosa Taddei (duo-pianists) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7400) \$5.95.

The music for duo-pianists is greatly enriched by the addition of this recently rescued Mendelssohn manuscript. The existence of this Concerto never has been a secret to historians and musicologists, but

apparently no one ever attempted to bring it to the public until current political events made the manuscript practically inaccessible. One day in 1950 George Mendelssohn, President of Vox, decided to make an attempt to rescue the manuscript of this concerto from the Berlin Staatsbibliothek—in the East Zone of Berlin under Russian-controlled administration. Orazio Frugoni, the Italian pianist, assisted with a deluge of letters and cables from America and with an agent-friend in Berlin. Finally a deal was worked out with the exchange of some American books on music; the concerto, together with another two-piano work in E flat of lesser merit, being microfilmed and sent to New York. By December 1951 the first presentation of the work in a broadcast in Geneva took place, then the first concert performance in Zurich in January of this year occurred, and a tape was made in Vienna for this recording. Other performances are assured, for there is considerable interest in it.

The *A flat Concerto* is more than a curiosity; it is a fine work and a worthy addition to the repertory. Although its composer had not reached his sixteenth birthday, he was already a mature artist and wrote with finish and distinction. Young as he was, his genius was trained and disciplined, and within two years he was to write the *Octet* and *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*. The first movement of the *A flat Concerto* opens songfully with the unmistakable accent of the new Romantic era, while the energetic motive that follows reveals the powerful influence of Beethoven, as does the lengthy working out of these materials by the orchestra alone before the soloists make their delayed, but dramatic entrance. There is a sustained animation and drive to the movement, with characteristic woodwind writing and other Mendelssohnian qualities, which continue throughout the other two movements.

The present performance sounds like a highly accomplished one, and is in addition a labor of love on Frugoni's part. He and Taddei make a good two-piano team, with the sensitive conductor Moralt providing well adjusted support. You will find this quite the most exciting new work in a long time. S.

Brahms: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77. Isaac Stern (violin) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4530) \$5.45.

Another new recording of the *Brahms Violin Concerto* was hardly needed, but a performance as magnificent as this one cannot be brushed off lightly, regardless of how many others may be in the catalogs. Stern is one of the finest of the younger violinists—many consider him the greatest talent among the current group of rising fiddlers. They have a good reason to consider him so on the strength of this performance alone. You will not hear a more valid interpretation of the score from any violinist. Stern has a feeling for the lyric beauty of this work

which is saturated with love and understanding, but it never gets sticky or cloying—always remains good musically. His technique is brilliant and not pushed beyond the bounds of reason, a common fault in too many violinists today. Needless to say his accompaniment is extraordinary, for Sir Thomas provides an orchestral fabric which is a great work of its own as well as being a perfect part of the whole. This is a Brahms *Concerto* which should bring pleasure to anyone who loves the work.

The other versions available on LP of this work include the Heifetz-Koussevitzky (*V-LCT-1043), Menuhin-Furtwängler (*V-LM-1142), and the Szigeti-Ormandy (*C-ML-4015) performances. They each have individual excellences of their own. Heifetz is his brilliant self in a reading which many have considered a model for some years, and its transfer to LP has been well accomplished, although the newer Stern disc has better reproduction. Szigeti has a reading of tremendous merit which in the long run does not have enough appeal for the majority of record buyers; it is admittedly not as brilliant playing as others, but it is a musicianly job which has earned the admiration of all musicians. Menuhin and Furtwängler wallow around the score in a fashion which wrings the last drop of sentiment out of the music in a broad, luscious manner that has great appeal. You may prefer one of these versions to the new Stern disc, but you will not find a better, more sincere, or generally finer reading than Stern, whose version we recommend highly. S.

R. Strauss: Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra.

Erich Ertel (oboe) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and R. Strauss: *Concerto in D minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 8*. Siegfried Borries (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7032) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: *Sonata No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 12*. One side, and Beethoven: *Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23*. Zino Francescatti (violin) and Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4478) \$5.45.

We were fascinated by these Gallic versions of Beethoven's Sonatas Nos. 3 and 4 for violin and piano, and we hasten to advise our readers that they are now available in recorded form. Of course, we realize that you may prefer the more orthodox German treatment of the music rather than the more romantic and poetic versions offered by the celebrated French players on the present disc. Regardless, you will miss something if you do not at least listen to the sterling, if somewhat different, renditions provided by Francescatti and Casadesus.

Brahms: *Trio in A minor, Op. 114*. Reginald Kell (clarinet); Frank Miller (violin); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7524) \$3.85.

Brahms: *Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2*. Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8163) \$4.98.

Brahms: *Quintet in F minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 34*. Chigi Quintet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-501) \$5.95.

Here are three recordings of Brahms' chamber music all of considerable excellence—able artists and reproduction of high quality. Of particular importance is the Hollywood Quartet's recording of the *Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2*. In this version it appears for the first time on LP records and it is certainly a very welcome addition to the LP catalog.

Mozart: *Sonata No. 40 in B-flat, K. 454*. Mischa Elman (violin) and Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1634) \$2.83. Coupled with Paganini—arr. Elman: *Caprice No. 24 in A minor*. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1208) \$5.72.

Paganini—arr. Elman: *Caprice No. 24 in A minor*. Mischa Elman (violin) and Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1625) \$2.83. Coupled with Mozart: *Sonata No. 40 in B-flat, K. 454*. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1208) \$5.72.

Mozart: *Sonata No. 35 in G, K. 379*. One side, and Mozart: *Sonata No. 40 in B-flat, K. 454*. Walter Barylli (violin) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5109) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Sonata No. 24 in C, K. 296*. One side, and Mozart: *Sonata No. 28 in E minor, K. 304*. And Mozart: *Sonata No. 25 in G, K. 301*. Walter Barylli (violin) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5130) \$5.95.

We have only space available to list these fine recordings of chamber music for violin and piano. We must, however, mention that we found the performances of high caliber and that the recording and the quality of the record surfaces are excellent. May we add that we were most favorably impressed with the violin playing of Walter Marylli, presently concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra?

Ravel: *Quartet in F*. Paganini Quartet. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1645) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-146) \$4.67.

Ravel: *Introduction and Allegro in G-flat*. Ann Mason Stockton (harp); Arthur Glegghorn (flute); Mitchell Lurie (clarinet); with the Hollywood String Quartet. One side, and Debussy: *Danses Sacrée et Profane*. Ann Mason Stockton (harp) with string ensemble conducted by Felix Slatkin. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8154) \$3.98.

Certainly the Ravel *Quartet in F* is not of such importance and popularity that its sale will warrant

six different LP recorded versions, yet this is the sixth recording of this selection to be released. If we were asked our choice, we would choose the present version or the Concert Hall recording by the Pascal Quartet (*CH-CHS-1123).

LP recordings of the two selections on the Capitol disc listed above are already available but there is more reason for duplications here because the new disc contains superior renditions of both of them. If you are interested in these Ravel and Debussy items, we suggest that you choose the present record.

CHORAL



Music of the Liturgy in English (according to the use of the Episcopal Church). Plainchant and Anglican Chant directed by Ray F. Brown and Harold W. Gilbert, with Andrew Tietjen (organ). Recorded under the auspices of the Joint Commission on Church Music at General Theological Seminary (N. Y.). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4528) \$5.45.

THE HOLY COMMUNION—Kyrie (Hymnal 719); Christmas Collect; Creed (Hymnal 720); Sursum Corda (Hymnal 734); Christmas Preface; Sanctus (Hymnal 721); End of Canon; Lord's Prayer (Hymnal 722); Agnus Dei (Hymnal 723); Gloria (Hymnal 724).

EVENING PRAYER—Preces; Psalm 15; Magnificat (Hymnal 658); Nunc Dimittis (Hymnal 673); Creed; Lord's Prayer (monotone); Suffrages; Collects for Peace and Aid Against Peril.

MORNING PRAYER—Festal Preces (Hymnal 602); Antiphon and Venite (Hymnal 607); Te Deum laudamus (Hymnal 613-617); Benedictus es Domine (Hymnal 623); Benedictus Dominus (Hymnal 634); Jubilate Deo (Hymnal 644); Suffrages and Lord's Prayer (Hymnal 602).

THE HOLY COMMUNION (Merbecke)—Kyrie Eleison (Hymnal 702); Credo (Hymnal 703); Sanctus (Hymnal 704); Lord's Prayer (Hymnal 705); Agnus Dei (Hymnal 706); Gloria in Excelsis (Hymnal 707).

Those interested in the music of the Episcopal Church will be glad to know that at long last a series of recordings has been made available that may be deemed official. These are contained on the LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm) disc listed above and were made under the auspices of the Joint Commission on Church Music. It is the intention that these recordings shall set a standard for use and interpretation of parts of the official music of the Church for priest, congregation, and choir, as set forth for the Commission in *The Choral Service* and in *The Plain-song Psalter* (both published by the H. W. Gray Co., New York) and in the Service Music Section of *The Hymnal*, 1940 (published by the Church Pension Fund, New York) to which edition the hymnal numbers refer.

These recordings were made by the students of General Theological Seminary. The singing of all of the services at the Seminary is done by the whole student body without the help of a choir, which means that the music and the style of singing it are well within the scope of small or ordinary choirs and, at the same time, worthy of attainment by good choirs. The organ accompaniment, when used, is intended to be no more than a soft background to help the singers keep the pitch.

We are glad to report that these recordings have been most successfully accomplished and we are sure that all persons interested in this music will be highly pleased with them. The diction of the singers is so fine that anyone at all familiar with these services will catch every word of the text.

R. Strauss: Taillefer, Op. 52. Maria Cebotari (soprano); Walter Ludwig (tenor); Hans Hotter (baritone); with the Rudolf Lamy Choir and the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **R. Strauss: Divertimento after Couperin, Op. 86.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7042) \$5.95.

Urania Records releases this month two heretofore unrecorded works by the late Richard Strauss. The first is a pretentious piece entitled *Taillefer, a Ballad for Chorus, Soloists and Orchestra*. It is based on a poem by Ludwig Uhland describing the Battle of Hastings and the part played in that historic fracas by the "gallant Taillefer." The work was composed in 1903 and was commissioned by the University of Heidelberg for the "solemn inauguration of the City Hall in Heidelberg." This event took place on 26 October 1903 with the largest orchestra known at that time, some 143 pieces in the band, to which were added soloists and chorus.

The performance recorded here does not convey the impression of large forces. Some of this may be due to technical inadequacies (the original tapes must be over four years old) or maybe the orchestra was reduced in size for reasons of economy. Musically, *Taillefer* reminds this reviewer of the latter part of Macbeth's definition of life. The soloists are all excellent, the late Maria Cebotari singing with a style and finesse that serves to recall music's loss at her early death. Ludwig and Hotter are also superior artists and the Radio Berlin Orchestra and the Rudolf Lamy Choir play and sing with vigor.

The obverse side is quite a different affair. Musically the piece owes its primary interest to Couperin's tunes. Strauss has supplied very attractive orchestration and the whole work sparkles in charming fashion. The various movements—*La Visionnaire*, *Musette de Choisi*, *La Fine Madelon*, *La Sezile*, and so on—are Couperin's original titles. Here again, the Radio Berlin Orchestra, under Arthur Rother, play with distinction and precision. The recording is only fair, however, being somewhat strident and with a regret-

table tendency towards rattling. The text and translation of *Taillefer* is furnished as well as notes on both works. W.

Schubert: Mass in G. (Sung in Latin). Laurence Dutoit (soprano); Alfred Planivsky (tenor); Harold Buchsbaum (basso); with the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossman. One side, and **Schubert: Miriams Siegesgesang.** (Sung in German). Angela Neulinger (soprano) with Norbert Scherlich (piano) and the Akademie Kammerchor, and **Schubert: An die Sonne.** (Sung in German). Akademie Kammerchor with Norbert Scherlich (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7510) \$5.95.

The eighteen year old Schubert, surely one of the most talented eighteen years olds in the history of music, wrote this *G Major Mass* in five days. Even here the typically Schubertian melodies are in evidence and, although he leans heavily on Mozart and Haydn (particularly the latter) the individual touches that characterize his later works can already be discerned. The intense emotional content is unusual in so young a composer and the scoring (strings and organ) is notable for a simplicity not always found in the works of a young romantic.

The Vienna Kammerchor and Symphony Orchestra under Ferdinand Grossman perform excellently. The tone of this hard working choral group is something to conjure with and Herr Grossmann's approach to the music is at once sincere and sympathetic. The soprano soloist, Laurence Dutoit, is capable and sings throughout in a pleasing manner.

The other side contains two works of Schubert that are both unfamiliar. The more pretentious of the two, *Miriams Siegesgesang* (Miriam's Song of Triumph) is based on a poem of Brillparzer's that describes the destruction of Pharaoh's armies in the Red Sea. The piece can be described alternatively as a cantata or a short oratorio. Angela Neulinger, a soprano of moderate gifts, sings her way through the work with style and spirit. This side also contains a short work for chorus, *An die Sonne*, written when Schubert was nineteen. It is based on a poem by J. P. Uz. The music is in no way exceptional although, like most of Schubert's output it is tuneful and pleasing.

Adequate recording is supplied and above average notes are furnished by Charles Stanley. W.

Buxtehude: Cantata ("Erbarm dich mein, O Herre Gott"). One side, and **Buxtehude: Cantata** ("Für wahr! Er trug unsere Krankheit") and **Buxtehude: Cantata** ("Befehl dem Engel, dass er komm"). Margot Guillaume (soprano); Ernst Max Luehr (basso); with the Musikrunde Chorus and Instrumental Ensemble of the Bach Anniversary (Hamburg) conducted by Marie-Luise Bechert. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7430) \$5.95.

Dietrich Buxtehude, one of the giants of music,

has long been a prime favorite with this writer, primarily because of his wonderful remoteness and Olympian calm that is coupled, in an unique fashion, with a wealth of expression. Buxtehude was a complete man; there are no doubts, no misgivings—he knew what he wanted and was at peace with both God and man. This happy state of affairs seems to have disappeared from the face of the Earth shortly after the beginning of the 19th century.

The three cantatas recorded here are making their first appearance on records. The first, *Erbarm dich mein, O Herre Gott* is an extended work for soprano, bass and mixed chorus. It is a sombre piece, filled with Old Testament foreboding and unhappiness. The music is expressive and the impression gained is one of great dignity and sincere repentance. The second, *Für wahr! Er trug unsere Krankheit* is an Easter cantata based on the famous prophesy in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. This work, too, is imbued with an atmosphere of sombre sadness that is very moving. The last of the three is shorter, a choral cantata for Michaelmas, *Befehl dem Engel, dass er komm*. This is a work of genius, containing as it does all the varied effects possible in choral writing, echo passages and so forth that are stunningly performed.

The soloists, Margot Guillaume and Ernst Max Luehr are both excellent. Moreover they both have the necessary sense of style and musical intelligence to sing this great baroque music properly. The instrumental ensemble and the Musikrunde Chorus (Hamburg) under Marie-Luise Bechert play and sing impeccably. The recording has been accomplished in a workman-like manner—it is faithful and rich sounding. Texts and translations are furnished. What else could one ask for? Only more of the same. W.

OPERA

Verdi: Macbeth (abridged). (Sung in German). Else Böttcher (soprano); Elisabeth Höngen (mezzo-soprano); Matthieu Ahlersmeyer (baritone); Herbert Alsen (basso); with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-220) \$18.50.

"I have long intended," writes Verdi to Antonio Barezzi, "to dedicate an opera to you, who have been father, benefactor, and friend to me. It was a duty I should have fulfilled sooner if imperious circumstances had not prevented me. . . . Now I send you *Macbeth*, which I prize above all my other operas, and therefore deem worthier to present to you. My heart offers it; may the heart receive it, as testimony of my eternal gratitude and love for you."

This beautiful note, written by the 34 year old composer gives ample evidence of his fondness for *Macbeth*, a fondness, incidentally that caused him

to revise the work several times. It was a great step forward for him, because here, for the first time, he laid emphasis on the orchestra and tried, successfully too, to create characters by means of music. Like all his work it was no mere bid for popularity for it is an opera with no leading tenor, no love scenes, nothing but mist, gloom, ghosts, murders, and darkness. On its first presentation, 15 March 1847, it was received with enthusiasm but has since sunk into relative obscurity.

For the present recording one should be grateful and perhaps should not examine the teeth of the gift horse too closely. The cast, for this abridged recording, is a competent one. Elisabeth Höngen, as Lady Macbeth, is convincing without being exceptional (the role is difficult). Her light mezzo is most always equal to the occasion and in the superlative *Sleep-walking Scene* she sings with intelligence (not trying for the final high note) and imagination. Equally fine is the great second act aria *La luce langue*. As Macbeth, Mathieu Ahlersmeyer exhibits a lyric baritone that is capably handled if a bit nasal at times. It is an uneven performance he gives, being ordinary in the early portions of the work but rising nobly to the occasion in the third act duet and in his wonderful aria, *Pieta, rispetto, amor*. Herbert Alsen, as Banquo, is acceptable. The other roles, especially that of Macduff, have been whittled down to minor ones—a particularly unfortunate excision being Macduff's aria *Ah, la paterno mano*. Karl Böhm and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra are superb, the general pacing of the performance and handling of the ensembles is very fine.

The chief drawback to the recording is the use of a German text. Lack of space prevents an extended discussion but one example comes to mind that is particularly illuminating. Shakespeare wrote *Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd*. Piave, Verdi's librettist, rendered this as *Tre volte miagola la gatta in fregnola* (which is good, if not inspired) but Werfel, in his translation gives us *Dreimal vor Liebe miaut die Katze* (which strikes this reviewer as dreadful). Such examples, unfortunately, can be multiplied.

The recording is good without being startling. A German-English libretto is included. W.

Rachmaninoff: The Miserly Knight—Act II. (Sung in English). Cesare Siepi (basso) with The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. One side, and **Arensky: Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a**. The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4526) \$5.45.

Sergei Rachmaninoff was a far more prolific composer than many realize. It was as a concert pianist, of course, that he gained a world-wide reputation and, one assumes, that it is as a pianist he will be best remembered despite such works as the *Second Symphony*, the *Second Concerto*, *The Isle of the Dead*, not to mention the inevitable salon pieces. He did, however, write three operas, *Aleko*, *The Miserly*

Knight and *Francesca da Rimini*. It is the second of these that concerns us here. The first performance was in Moscow in 1906. The story, based on a poetic drama by Pushkin, is an unsavory one, being concerned with the love of an old knight for his hoard of gold. In the end his son challenges him to a duel and the old man dies of a heart attack. The entire second act, which consists of a long miserly monologue, has been recorded by Cesare Siepi. The music is melodic, but undistinguished and inclined to be monotonous. It is sung in English but since Mr. Siepi is an Italian, his diction is not at its best and it is difficult to follow the words. Vocally Siepi is one of the finest of the younger singers and he gives a good account of himself.

Much more successful is the rousing performance of Arensky's *Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky*. This sprightly work, based on Tchaikovsky's song *Christ had a Garden*, is a neat, compact and almost scholarly set of variations. Thomas Scherman and the Little Orchestra Society play the work to the hilt and the recording is just about the finest Columbia has given us. Resounding pizzacati, sharp precise attacks and soaring string tone feature both performance and recording. Musically, this reviewer, found the *Variations* far more interesting and rewarding than the somewhat dull and pretentious Rachmaninoff excerpt.

Considering the fact that the *Miserly Knight* is unknown to all but Rachmaninoff specialists, Columbia has been remiss in supplying only perfunctory notes that confine themselves to telling the story of the opera. Also considering Siepi's unfamiliarity with English, the text should have been supplied. W.

Verdi: Il Trovatore (complete). (Sung in Italian).

Bianca Scacciati, Ida Mannarini (sopranos); Giuseppina Zinetti (mezzo-soprano); Francesco Merli (tenor); Enrico Molinari, Corrado Zambelli (baritones); with the Chorus of La Scala and the Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-120) \$12.11.

On the 19th of January, next year, *Il Trovatore* will be one hundred years old. It seems fantastic, listening to the broad, flowing melodies with which the work abounds, that it could be that old for the opera sounds as full of life as though it were written only yesterday (fuller, in fact, for no modern music has one-tenth the vitality of this incredible score).

This Columbia release may be viewed as a mixed blessing. Certainly there could scarcely be a better performance than this one. Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli achieves a superb amount of fire and melodrama without driving either the singers or the orchestra. His concept of the music is, as one might reasonably expect, a very Italianate one with the result that it bounces along in a fashion that many might consider vulgar; but to this reviewer it is just life—life such as we don't have today.

The singers are all past masters (or mistresses) of the style and turn in fine performances. Francesco Merli, the Manrico, is a very somatonic hero. He sings with an unerring sense of the theatre and his voice, while occasionally strained, is usually more than adequate. Enrico Molinari is as fine a Conte di Luna as one will ever hear. He is a true baritone with a superb upper register. His two arias, *Il balen* and *Per me ora fatale* are perfectly sung. Leonora, in the person of Bianca Scacciati, is distraught and emotional (as well she might be) and, barring a few shrill notes that are probably recording faults, is vocally pleasing. Azucena is sung by Guisepina Zinetti, a deep-voiced contralto, ideally suited to the role.

The recording, unfortunately, leaves something to be desired judged by present day standards. This is an LP issue of an old recording made in the early Thirties. Columbia has done a fine technical job, but certain deficiencies inherent in the old masters, could not be overcome. The competition, at the moment, is the Cetra set (TNR Jan. '52) which is a better recording but not as good a performance. W.

Astrid Varnay Sings (Vol. I). (Sung in Italian, German and French). Astrid Varnay (soprano) with the Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Weigert. 1-12" disc (*REMINGTON RLP-199-45) \$2.19.

CONTENTS: *Aida*—Ritorna vincitor; *Simon Boccanegra*—Amelia Grimaldi's Aria; *Il Trovatore*—D'amor sull' ali rosee; *Fidelio*—Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin?; *Die Walküre*—Der Männer Sippe; *La Juive*—Il va venir; *Thais*—Ah! je suis belle.

Astrid Varnay Sings (Vol. II). (Sung in Italian, German and French). Astrid Varnay (soprano) with the Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Weigert. 1-12" disc (*REMINGTON RLP-199-53) \$2.19.

CONTENTS: *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Voi lo sapete; *Un Ballo in Maschera*—Ma dall' arido stelo divulsa; *Manon Lescaut*—In quelle trine morbide; *Hérodiade*—Il est doux; *Der Fliegende Holländer*—Jo-ho-hoe! Traft ihr das Schiff; *Oberon*—Ozean, du Ungeheurer; *Der Freischütz*—Agathe's Cavatina.

Remington Records, leaders in the low priced classical field, issue two records this month featuring Astrid Varnay in a truly formidable collection of operatic arias. The material ranges through Italian opera (Verdi, Mascagni and Puccini); French arias by Halévy and Massenet and German excerpts represented by Weber, Beethoven and Wagner.

As might be expected, the performances are somewhat uneven. The *Aida* excerpt is very well done and Amelia's aria from *Simon Boccanegra* is even better. The *Trovatore* selection is less satisfactory due to Miss Varnay's inability to negotiate the florid passages smoothly. The *Fidelio* aria is really a duet for orchestra and soprano but Herr Weigert the conductor and the Austrian Symphony Orchestra (who-

ever they may be) do not do their share. The playing is slovenly which adds less than nothing to the performance. The *Walküre* excerpt fares better (easier to play, perhaps) while the selections from *La Juive* and *Thais* are acceptable.

Volume II opens with a smooth performance of *Senta's Ballad*, with chorus, that is very effective. The great *scena* from *Oberon* is also well done. The final German aria, *Und ob die Wolke* from "Der Freischütz" is very expressively sung. Returning to Italian and French opera Miss Varnay turns in effective performances of popular arias. Incidentally, the aria from *Un Ballo in Maschera* identified as *Ecco l'orido campo* turns out to be *Ma dall' arido stelo divulsa*. The first title is that of the preceding recitative.

The total impression gained from these two discs is that Miss Varnay is a gifted singer, both vocally and dramatically. Her voice is a large one, capable of coloring and her obvious intelligence enables her to make the music dramatically convincing.

The recording is reasonably good on both records, with considerably more surface noise being present than on more expensive LP discs. The noise, however, is not as much as was usually present on 78 rpm's of several years ago. The voice is favored in these recordings at the expense of the orchestra (which might be just as well) but these records may be considered a good buy at the price. W.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Finale, Act I; Finale, Act III. (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz, Elfride Trötschel (sopranos); Georgine von Milinkowic (mezzo-soprano); with the Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9606) \$5.85.

What may come to be considered the last word in *Rosenkavalier* performances is recorded here by Decca. Unfortunately the performance is confined to two finales, those of Act I and Act III.

Superbly schooled singers in the persons of Lemnitz, von Milinkowic and Trötschel sing the music in virtually perfect fashion. Tiana Lemnitz is an ideal Feldmarschallin and she sings with tonal purity and more than a modicum of expression. The role is, admittedly, a difficult one but she surmounts the technical difficulties with ease and avoids the pitfalls that trap many singing actresses. Sentiment, not sentimentality, could be called the keynote of her characterization. Georgine von Milinkowic is a delightful mezzo and a convincing Octavian. That she is a distinguished singer is apparent from her first notes and she never lets one down. Elfride Trötschel is a particular favorite with this corner and her Sophie is dramatically sound. There is none of the coyness that so often mars other singers' performances of the part. Vocally, of course, she is first-rate.

The Württemberg State Orchestra under Ferdinand Leitner plays well, confining themselves, either by choice or by microphone placement, to a supporting role. Choice of tempi, phrasing and coloring are

all tasteful but, one feels, these matters have been settled by the singers rather than the conductor. In all events, the results are eminently satisfactory and that is what counts.

The recording, with the exception of the orchestra's being in the background on occasion, is good. Detailed notes have been supplied but—and this is a serious omission—no text.

W.

VOCAL



Soirée Française. (Sung in French). Pierre Bernac (baritone) and Francis Poulenc (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4484) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Quatre poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire, Tu vois le feu du soir, Main déminée par le cœur, Calligrammes de Guillaume Apollinaire (Poulenc); L'île heureuse, Villanelle des petits canards (Chabrier); Beau soir, L'échelonnement des haies, Le promenoir des deux amants (Debussy); Trois mélodies (Satie).

Ravel: Histoires naturelles. (Sung in French). One side, and **Falla: (7) Canciones populares españolas.** (Sung in Spanish). Gérard Souzay (baritone) and Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-536) \$4.95.

Columbia's *Soirée Française* is one of those mixtures that are issued from time to time on LP that give one pause. There are no less than fourteen songs by Poulenc on one side, and on the other side ten, distributed as follows—two by Chabrier, five by Debussy and three by Erik Satie. To put it briefly, this is too "much of a muchness" as Alice once said.

There is not enough variety in Poulenc's muse to make fourteen songs interesting, especially when one has no idea of the text and M. Bernac, Frenchman though he is, does not enunciate clearly enough for the average person with a middling command of French to make head nor tail of the words. The music of Chabrier, Debussy and Satie has a little more interest, particularly the latter who is represented by *Trois Mélodies*. These beautiful songs are titled *Daphnéo* (a musical pun), *Le Statue du Bronze* (all about a frog who is tired of holding her mouth open all day) and *Le Chapelier* (our old friend the Mad Hatter from *Alice aux Payées Merveilles*). It is unfortunate that neither Pierre Bernac nor Francis Poulenc is able to realize the humor inherent in the music.

Gérard Souzay and the *Histoires Naturelles* of Ravel is quite a different affair. Here the soloist enunciates clearly, sings with style and polish. In addition M. Souzay possesses a typically Gallic dryness, a mordant wit that goes far in making these songs, trifles though they are, an artistic success. Previous recordings by Bernac and Singher are also eminently acceptable. Equally fine is the performance of Manuel de Falla's *Siete canciones populares españolas*. These have been made twice before, once

in Supervia's historic recording, and in a surprisingly fine one by Lydia de Ibarrando (TNR Sept. '51). This is the first time they have been recorded by a male voice and the result, while strange at first, is satisfying, due to Souza's artistry.

Recording in both discs is good. As indicated Columbia supplies neither text nor translation. The notes (if such perfunctory comments can be so dignified) are scarcely of any value. London gives an English translation of the songs that is of some help but is certainly not an adequate substitution for the text.

W.

Cavalcade of Musical Comedy. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with the RCA Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Ted Dale. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1536) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-102) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *If You Were the Only Girl; More Than You Know; If There is Someone Lovelier Than You; I Get a Kick Out of You; You and the Night and the Music; I'm in the Mood for Love; Just One of Those Things; If I Loved You.*

If you are in the mood to listen to a group of musical comedy songs that have made history during the last quarter of a century, we do not hesitate to recommend the present recording. Miss Stevens and Mr. Merrill are certainly in the groove and they are splendidly supported by a fine chorus and orchestra under the spirited direction of Ted Dale.

Latin Rhythm Songs. James Melton (tenor) with the RCA Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1568) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-150) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Temptation; Sing to Me, Guitar; Love Star; Beyond the Sea; Brazil; and Laura.*

James Melton is certainly one of the most popular tenors on records and the present group of recordings will very likely add to his popularity. He is well supported by a fine chorus and orchestra under the brilliant direction of Frank Black, and RCA Victor has been careful to see that the best of reproduction prevails.

A Margaret Truman Program. Margaret Truman (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1616) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-145) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Les filles de Cadix, Coppélia Waltz (Delibes); Don Giovanni—Batti, batti (Mozart); My Johann (Grieg); Gavotte in D (Popper); One Kiss (Romberg); Comin' Thro' the Rye; Smilin' Through (Penn).*

As Miss Truman has sung all of these selections many times in the concert hall and over the air, we are sure that our readers will know whether they are interested in this LP disc or not. All that is necessary for us to do is to list the titles and say that they have been faithfully recorded.

PIANO



Chopin: (14) Valses. Dinu Lipatti (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4522) \$5.45.

Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35. One side, and **La Montaine: Sonata for Piano and La Montaine: A Child's Picture Book and La Montaine: Toccata.** John La Montaine (piano). 1-12" disc (*DORIAN DR-332) \$5.45.

We found these two LP discs of particular interest. We were delighted with Lipatti's playing of the Chopin waltzes. Anyone listening to them will, we are sure, feel that the musical world suffered a great loss when this young pianist died at the early age of thirty-three in 1950.

On the second disc we have recorded for the first time several representative compositions by the distinguished young American composer and pianist, John La Montaine. Mr. Montaine, who was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and received his early musical training in Chicago, is a young musician worthy of watching. He studied at the Eastman School of Music, and his first orchestral works were performed by the Eastman-Rochester Symphony under Howard Hanson. After serving nearly four years in the U. S. Navy during World War II, he appeared in concerts in both the United States and South America. He conducted Menotti's opera "The Consul" during its original New York run. From this short sketch of some of Mr. Montaine's achievements in the musical world you will probably gather, as we did, that he is certainly a well-rounded musician, and that much of importance may be expected from him in the years ahead.

We were particularly impressed with his piano suite, "A Child's Picture Book," consisting of five short sections entitled: *Pageant*; *Story for a Rainy Day*; *Jack Frost*; *The Giant Has a Hobby-Horse*; and *Even Coolies Watch the Sunset*.

Guimomar Novães Encores. Guimomar Novães (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7500) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Prelude in G minor* (Bach); *Orpheus and Eurydice*—Melody and Dance of the Blessed Spirits (Gluck); *Alcestis*—Ballet Music (Gluck); *Intermezzo in B-flat minor*, Op. 117, No. 2; *Capriccio No. 76 in B minor*; *Waltz in A-flat*, Op. 36, No. 15 (Brahms); *Memories of Childhood* (Pinto); *Fireflies* (Philipp); *Hornpipe* (Vuillemin).

Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35 ("Funeral March"). One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58.** Guimomar Novães. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7360) \$5.95.

Mme. Novães is noted for the quality of her encores—they are always pieces of high musical value rather than "show pieces" or those of great popular appeal. Thus in this group of encores we

have a miniature recital of wide variety and unusual interest. Discerning lovers of keyboard music are urged to investigate this unique record.

The two Chopin Sonatas on the second disc listed above have both appeared on LP discs before with other couplings. Sonata No. 2 with the Chopin *Fantasia in F minor*, Op. 49 (*VX-PL-6230—TNR Aug. 50) and Sonata No. 3 with Schumann's *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (*VX-PL-6710—TNR June 51).

Two Grand. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Victor Alessandro. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1648) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-154) \$4.67.

Here is a re-recording that, as they say, may "take fire." In 1946 Whittemore and Lowe recorded an album (V-DC-40) entitled *Two Grand*, and they have done it anew (with more modern recording techniques) for the LP and "45" issues. We find the numbers rather fascinating. The selections are: *Lover*; *The Song Is You*; *In the Still of the Night*; *The Continental*; *Falling in Love with Love*; *Brazil*; *They Didn't Believe Me*; and *That Old Black Magic*.

VIOLIN



Heifetz Plays. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg and Donald Voorhees. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1642) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-163) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Carmen Fantasie* (Bizet-Waxman); *Introduction and Rondo Capriccio*, Op. 28 (Saint-Saëns); *Havanaise*, Op. 83 (Saint-Saëns); *Zigeunerweisen*, Op. 20, No. 1 (Sarasate).

If you would like to sit back and enjoy a group of fascinatingly tuneful selections played by one of the greatest violinists of our time, this LP disc is indicated. They are all tunes that you will recognize just as soon as Heifetz starts bowing. Fine orchestral support and the best of reproduction are added features.

HARPSICHORD



Handel: Suite No. 1 in A and Handel: Suite No. 2 in F. One side, and **Handel: Suite No. 3 in D minor.** Frank Pelleg (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*HANDEL SOCIETY HDL-4) \$5.95.

Handel: Suite No. 4 in E minor and Handel: Suite No. 5 in E. One side, and **Handel: Suite No. 6 in F-sharp minor and Handel: Fugue in A minor and Handel: Fugue in D.** Frank Pelleg (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*HANDEL SOCIETY HDL-5) \$5.95.

These melodious suites are not particularly difficult and were probably written with the average student in mind. They are, however, lovely in their sim-

plidity and are just the sort of pieces that anyone interested in the chamber music of this period may easily enjoy. Frank Pelleg, presently the leading harpsichordist of Israel and the Near East, gives performances that are bound to please, and the reproduction is excellent throughout.

Scarlatti: (12) Sonatas (Vol. I). Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5106) \$5.95.

Scarlatti: (12) Sonatas (Vol. II). Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5116) \$5.95.

We are sure that music lovers will be delighted to know that recordings are now available by the brilliant young harpsichordist, Fernando Valenti. Valenti has a number of "firsts" to his credit. He is the first player of his instrument to record a movie sound track, the first to have appeared on television, and the first to perform in a Broadway show. He has played the harpsichord continuo in Bach performances with the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony, and played at Tanglewood at a lecture recital. In 1950, he was chosen to play at the Bach Festival with Pablo Casals in Prades. Later during the same summer, he played and taught at the Festival at Aspen, Colorado. At present he is a member of the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music—the first harpsichord instructor in the history of that famous institution.

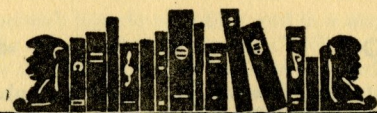
Westchester has seen to it that Mr. Valenti has been most faithfully recorded.



DICTION

On the Death of King George VI. Laurence Olivier (reader). One side, and **The Funeral Service at Windsor.** Recorded from the B. B. C. Broadcast. 1-10" disc (*CAEDMON TTC-1003) \$3.85.

On Sunday 17 February 1952 a memorial service for King George VI was held at the Church of the Transfiguration (the Little Church Around the Corner) in New York. At the service the distinguished English actor, Sir Laurence Olivier, made an address that he had written for the occasion. It so impressed those in attendance that it was thought that it should be made available in record form for others to hear. Sir Laurence was approached and he gave his permission with the proviso that the profits from the sale of the recording should be given to the Actors' Fund of America and the Episcopal Actors' Guild. Through the courtesy of the BBC, portions of its recording of the funeral service for King George at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, are to be found on the reverse side of this LP disc.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Colosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Haden Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
 ⚬ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 6

AUGUST, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

Several years ago Mr. Clough wrote us and said that he was working on a comprehensive, all inclusive catalogue of classical recordings. As requested we sent him a complete file of THE NEW RECORDS and entered his subscription for future copies. From time to time we heard rumors that this great work was about to be published, but nothing came of it until a week or so ago when we received a shipment containing a limited number of copies of this book.

As we examined this tome, we could not help marveling at the thoroughness with which this stupendous task was undertaken. The compilers have attempted to include every record of permanent music issued throughout the world since the advent of electrical recording until June 1951. Thus many LP and some 45 rpm discs are included. Despite every attempt to save space by using abbreviations and symbols, it was found necessary to use 890 large two-column pages in this work. However, we are glad to report that while no effort was spared to keep this book to a reasonable size, nothing was done to lessen its value as a book of reference. The typography is excellent; the type faces are sufficiently large and clear for easy reading; all items have been nicely spaced which makes for fine legibility. It has been sturdily bound in full cloth.

As a reference book in the field of recorded music there is nothing else like it. Nothing that has been previously published comes anywhere near it in comprehensiveness. However, it is purely a book of reference. No one would think of attempting to read it any more than one would attempt to read a telephone direc-

tory. If you wish to know the recordings that have been made since 1925 of a certain musical composition, you may look it up under its composer (recordings are alphabetically arranged by composers) and with the aid of the chart of abbreviations and symbols you will be able to tell the number of recordings that have been made, the artists, the record manufacturers, and whether the various versions are listed as available in the present catalogs.

This is not a book for the average record collector; it is for the specialist—the serious and discerning collector who wishes to know what recordings have been made and whether or not they are presently generally available. It is for one who will make a list of the recordings that interest him and will continue to seek them although it may take years eventually to find them. Don't expect even the largest record dealers to have any great percentage of the thousands upon thousands of records listed in this huge volume.

If your local dealer cannot supply *The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music*, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled as long as the supply lasts. The price is \$17.50 (postpaid within the U.S.A.).

* * *

Just as we were about to go to press, Decca sent us review copies of ten of the first records to be released in its new moderately priced "4,000 Series." All of these recordings were made in Europe by Deutsche Grammophon and the reproduction is well up to the high standard set by that famous company. Time and space will only permit our listing these discs; but, since practically all of the selections are extremely well known, that is really all that is necessary. If any of these selections appeal to

you, you will find them quite a bargain at their modest price—\$2.50 for a 10-inch LP disc.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. One side, and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12.** Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Edmund Nick. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4000) \$2.50.

Lehar: Highlights from "The Merry Widow." (Sung in German). Elfride Trötschel, Walther Ludwig and supporting soloists with the Bavarian State Opera Chorus and the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Edmund Nick. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4001) \$2.50.

Beethoven: Romance No. 1 in G, Op. 40. One side, and **Beethoven: Romance No. 2 in F, Op. 50.** Josef Fuchs (violin) with the Little Orchestra Society Chorus and by Thomas Scherman. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4004) \$2.50.

Renata Tebaldi Sings. (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4005) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Andrea Chenier*—La mamma morta; *La Wally*—Ebben, ne andro lontana; *La Bohème*—Si, mi chiamano Mimi; *La Bohème*—Donde lieta uscì.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. One side, and **Weber: Oberon**—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4006) \$2.50.

Puccini Arias. (Instrumental only.) Camarata and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4007) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Madama Butterfly*—Un bel di, vedremo; *Gianni Schicchi*—O mio babbino caro; *La Bohème*—Musetta's Waltz; *La Bohème*—Che gelida manina.

Operatic Arias. (Instrumental only.) Camarata and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4008) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Aïda*—Celeste Aïda; *Aïda*—Nume, custode e vindice; *Louise*—Depuis le jour; *Carmen*—Flower song.

J. Strauss: Blue Danube Waltz. One side, and **J. Strauss: Wiener Blut.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4009) \$2.50.

Rossini: Semiramide—Overture. One side, and **Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri**—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4010) \$2.50.

Bartók: (3) Rondos on Folk Tunes. One and one-half sides, and **Bartók: Roumanian Folk Dances.** Lili Kraus (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4011) \$2.50.

ORCHESTRA



Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or—Suite. One and one-half sides, and **Moussorgsky: A Night on Bald Mountain.** State Radio Orchestra of the U. S. S. R. conducted by Nicolai Golovanov. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6000) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Christmas Eve—Suite. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Sinfonietta on Russian Themes, Op. 31.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-12" disc. (*UR-URLP-7045) \$5.95.

The orchestral suite made from the opera, *Le Coq d'Or*, covers the main scenes and action, and is at the same time a unified, masterly orchestral work of its own. This recording contains the uncut, original version of *Le Coq d'Or Suite*, prepared by Maximilian Steinberg and Alexander Glazounov in accordance with the instructions of the composer. The suite is in four movements and is one of Rimsky-Korsakov's most pictorial canvases. The masterful scoring, lyrical beauty, and brilliant coloring are *Rimsky par excellence*. This popular suite has been recorded many times before; the present LP lists include readings by Beecham, Desarzens, Désormière, and Fekete. The present set is one of the best recordings we have yet heard from Russia, whose standard is rather low. Golovanov achieves remarkable precision from his orchestra and summons a great deal of color and atmosphere too. The reproduction is very good. Since this version is complete it should prove appealing to record collectors. Désormière and Beecham have LP couplings which may be more desirable—Désormière's interpretation is notably fine. The second side filler on the present Golovanov is a splendid performance of *A Night on Bald Mountain*, played with verve and precision and a refreshing lack of the monkeyshines usually injected into this piece.

A string quartet with which the composer was dissatisfied was the basis for the *Sinfonietta on Russian Themes*. The quartet, revised and orchestrated for full orchestra—and retitled—is in three movements, the fourth section of the original quartet being omitted. The three movements bear these titles: In the Field, At the Charivari, and In the Khorovod. Much of this music is reminiscent of other works, including those to come!—Stravinsky borrowed a horn solo theme from the second movement which you will immediately recognize in his "Ronde des Princesses" of *The Firebird*.

From his opera "Christmas Eve," Rimsky derived an orchestral suite, mostly taken from the third act, with the exception of the introduction. It is typical Rimsky, with its five short sections depicting fanciful fairy-tale doings. Leopold Ludwig and the orchestra present thoughtful performances of these two works, well recorded. It is not great music, but it is pleasant and colorful. S.

Quiet Music (Vol. I). Columbia Salon Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-510) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Claire de Lune*; *Blue Danube Waltz*; *Tuica*; *La Paloma*; *Parade of the Wooden Soldiers*; *Minuet in G* (Paderewski); *Spring Song*; *Bright Shines the Moon*; *La Rayuela*; *Speak to Me of Love*; *No Longer Does the Dawn Caress Me*; *Serenade* (Schubert).

Quiet Music (Vol. II). Dell Trio, Columbia Salon Orchestra and others. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-511) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Laura*; *Sleeping Beauty Waltz*; *Pantomime*; *Serenade* (Drigo); *Sufriendo*; *Roses of Picardy*; *Alt Wien*; *Serenade* (Toselli); *Charmaine*; *Neapolitan Nights*; *Southern Roses*; *Diane*; *Sârba Calului*.

Quiet Music (Vol. III). Columbia Salon Orchestra. Al Goodman and his Orchestra and others. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-512) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Dark Eyes*; *Valse Sentimentale*; *Tango du Rêve*; *Trees*; *Serenade Espagnole*; *Lover, Come Back to Me*; *To a Wild Rose*; *Artist's Life*; *Serenade* (Moszkowski); *Glow Worm*; *Berceuse* (Godard); *Country Gardens*.

Quiet Music (Vol. IV). Dell Trio, Columbia Salon Orchestra, Al Goodman and his Orchestra and others. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-513) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Nocturne*, Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin); *Avalon*; *Entr'acte-Gavotte* (Thomas); *Melody in F*; *Two Hearts in ¾ Time*; *September Song*; *From the Land of the Sky-blue Water*; *Oh, Those Dark Eyes*; *Emperor Waltz*; *Musical Snuff-box*; *Sentimiento Gaucho*; *In a Persian Market*.

Quiet Music (Vol. V). Marek Weber and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-514) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes*; *Fledermaus Medley*; *Souvenir* (Drdla); *The Fireplace*; *Uchar Kupiec*; *I Am Sorry*; *Caucasian Love Song*; *L'Amour, Toujours l'Amour*; *Countess Maritza Medley*; *Two Guitars*; *Kasbek*; *Birch Tree in the Meadow*; *Songs My Mother Taught Me*; *Gypsy Baron Medley*; *The Old Refrain*; *Student Prince Medley*.

Quiet Music (Vol. VI). Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-GL-515) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Play, Fiddle, Play*; *Spanish Dance* (Granados); *Palabras de Mujer*; *Tell Me Why*; *On an Island with You*; *Danse Arabe*; *Intermezzo*; *Francesca*; *Temptation*; *Jesuita*; *Adios, Mariquita Linda*; *Greek Bolero*.

We can think of no better way to introduce this new series of records than to quote what Columbia said when they were announced to the trade:

"Sometime, during every day, comes a moment when the charms of quiet music are called for. Most often, these times come at the close of the day, in moments of relaxation—perhaps at home, per-

haps at a favorite club. The music in this collection has been planned for such moments, the minutes when familiar melodies and pleasant arrangements may take their soothing effect. For these periods of relaxation, Columbia has gathered a group of artists expert in the presentation of such delightful music, and has arranged the programs in a series of charming melodies. No matter what your mood, you will find in them the pleasure and enjoyment that only quiet music can bring with its soft, flowing melodies of yesterday."

Debussy: Nocturnes—Nuages, Fêtes, Sirènes. One side, and **Berlioz: Roman Carnival Overture** and **Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante defunte** and **Ravel: Alborado del Gracioso**. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50005) \$5.95.

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor. One side, and **Stravinsky: The Firebird**—Suite. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50004) \$5.95.

The science and art of recording has advanced in many respects during its fifty-odd years of existence. To one who remembers the early accoustical efforts, modern LP's are a veritable miracle. Even good 78 rpm records of the period 1935-1940 sound antiquated when compared with a good LP and now, via Mercury and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, one hears a recorded sound that makes many of the early and even contemporary LP's sound dated.

Despite the quality of the recording, however, one should not overlook the many sterling attributes of both orchestra and conductor. The disc of French Orchestral Music is a gem. The *Roman Carnival Overture* receives a stirring performance, due largely to careful phrasing and meticulous attention to detail plus an orchestra that plays as a man. These qualities are amply evident in the *Pavane* and the rousing *Alborado del Gracioso*, the latter a particularly felicitous item. The other side is devoted to a singularly fine performance of Debussy's *Nocturnes*. Dorati's approach differs considerably from the conventional—there being less emphasis on the impressionism and more on sound. It is a straightforward job, one particularly to this reviewer's liking; but adherents of either the Stokowski or Ansermet recordings will be apt to find it, perhaps, a little too four-square.

The second disc contains the *Fire Bird* and the first satisfactory recording of Borodin's *Second Symphony* and is equally fine both as to recording and performance. The *Fire Bird* receives ballet treatment which is fitting and proper, if a little unusual. The *Borodin B Minor Symphony* receives lush treatment—exactly what it should have in view of its inherent late romanticism.

Unquestionably, here are two records that belong in every library, whether Hi-Fi or plain music lover's, for there is much, on both counts, to satisfy the most

discriminating. Competent notes, both musical and extra-musical, are supplied. W.

Smetana: The Moldau. One side, and **Smetana: From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8166) \$3.98.

Smetana: The Moldau. Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Singer. One side, and **Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2 in D.** L'Orchestre des Concerts Colonne conducted by Georges Enesco. 1-10" disc (*REMINGTON RLP-149-52) \$1.69.

Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A, Op. 11 and **Dvořák: Slavonic Dance No. 1 in C, Op. 46, No. 1.** One side, and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor** and **Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust—Rakoczy March.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-10" disc (*MGME-541) \$3.

Now that we have two more recordings of Smetana's *The Moldau*, music lovers have seven different versions to choose from. For good value we recommend the Remington recording listed above with the only LP recording of Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2* on the reverse side. . . . The M-G-M disc contains the third LP recorded version of Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1* with three other ever-popular orchestral selections.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 364. Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Lillian Fuchs (viola) with the Zimble Sinfonietta. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9596) \$5.85.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 364. Reinhold Barchet (violin) and Heinz Kirchner (viola) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Wilhelm Seegelken. One side, and **Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 297.** Fritz Fischer (oboe); Ernst Flackus (clarinet); Gerhard Görner (horn); Hugo Gehring (bassoon); with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhart. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7320) \$5.95.

Certainly anyone would prefer the Vox disc listed above when he gets, in addition to the Mozart *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 364* (which is spread over two sides of the Decca record), the very lovely *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 297* for only 10c more. It would seem that record publishers never take the trouble to check their competitors' catalogs.

Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake, Op. 20 (complete). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-565/6) \$11.90.

Because of its length, Tchaikovsky's famous ballet *The Swan Lake* is seldom given in its entirety—it would take a full evening and most ballet companies feel that there should be some variety in their pro-

grams, and thus an abridged version is given with another short number. However, we feel that there is sufficient variety in the music itself to warrant the issuance of a complete recording of it. London has supplied this recording by the London Symphony under the very brilliant direction of Anatole Fistoulari. As the reproduction is of the finest, we can recommend this pair of discs most highly.

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 5 in D, Op. 6, No. 5. One side, and **Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 6 in G minor, Op. 6, No. 6.** Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-396) \$4.95.

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 6, No. 7. One side, and **Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 8 in C minor, Op. 6, No. 8.** Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-543) \$4.95.

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 9 in F, Op. 6, No. 9. One side, and **Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 10 in D minor, Op. 6, No. 10.** Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-585) \$4.95.

Boyd Neel continues with his recording of the Handel Concerti Grossi. He is tops in music of this character as most record collectors know. London has supplied him with the best reproduction, and so we can recommend these records without reservation.

Křenek: Symphonic Elegy for String Orchestra. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Schönberg: Erwartung, Op. 17.** Dorothy Dow (soprano) with the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4524) \$5.45.

NOTE For review of this disc see under VOCAL.

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"). Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Wolf. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in D for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 101.** Gaspar Cassado (violin-cello) with the Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Wolf. 1-12" disc (*REMINGTON RLP-199-79) \$2.19.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

Dinner Music. Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9019) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9019) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *My Mimosa; You Are All I've Wanted; Student Prince—Ballet Music; Like a Star in the Night; Sleeping Beauty; There's a Riot in Havana; A Horn in a Fiddle Shop; American Humoresque; *Gold and Silver Waltz; *Faithfully Yours; *Blossom Time Waltzes; *Tales of Hoffman—Barcarolle; *The Merry Widow Waltzes.*

(Note: Selections marked with an asterisk are not

included in the 45 rpm set).

Dinner music *par excellence* played by a top-notch orchestra splendidly recorded by RCA Victor. If you are looking for some new dinner music, here it is.

CONCERTO



Milhaud: Concerto No. 4 for Piano and Orchestra.

Zadel Skolovsky (piano) with the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Darius Milhaud. One side, and **Milhaud: Saudades do Brazil**. Zadel Skolovsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4523) \$5.45.

Milhaud: Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Orchestra.

One side, and **Honegger: Concertino for Piano and Orchestra**. Fabienne Jacquinot (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-122) \$3.

Saudades do Brazil, or Recollections of Brazil, are "memory pieces" of that South American country written in 1920 and 1921 after the composer's return to Paris. He had been in Brazil in 1917 and 1918 as an attaché of the French embassy in Rio de Janeiro. There are twelve dances in the suite, and each one of them is named for a district in the city of Rio. Written originally as a piano suite, the *Saudades* has also been transcribed for orchestra by the composer. Milhaud himself has called these pieces "evocations of Brazilian rhythms" but without folk music elements. The composer has further stated that he wishes the pieces to be considered "not as reproductions of actual dances, but as music suggested by the dance rhythms of Brazil—in the main by tango rhythms." We are to think of this music, says Milhaud, as "a sort of composite portrait of these dances, to some extent idealized." They are beautifully interesting music, and are played expertly by Skolovsky.

The *Concerto No. 4*, also superbly played by Skolovsky with the composer conducting, is mighty fine Milhaud. If you like Milhaud's music, you will like this very much. It is brimming over with energy and motion; never seems to be still for a moment. Even the middle movement, *Très lent*, has a persistent forward motion. There is, however, no feeling of "effect" or of conscious striving for motion—it just comes naturally in this closely-packed work. Milhaud's dissonance is in evidence throughout. The concerto and the *Saudades* provide a splendid disc, well recorded, of Milhaud's music.

MGM offers another excellent little disc in this modestly priced coupling of two piano concertos. Milhaud's *Concerto No. 1*, written in 1934, shows the composer well established in his craft, and is rather formal in design. It is a pleasant piece making little demand on the listener. Honegger's *Concertino* is not today the jazzy and bizarre novelty that it was in its first (1925) performance. It makes a lot more sense now than it did then; it is a serious piece

despite the light and humorous touches in it. Fabienne Jacquinot is a gifted young artist, who, with the fine conductor Fistoulari, presents readings of these works that do them full justice. The Honegger is also recorded by Oscar Levant, but with a different coupling. S.

Vivaldi: (12) Concerti for Violin and String Orchestra, Op. 9 ("La Cetra") ("The Lyre"). Louis Kaufman (violin) conducting the String Ensemble of the Orchestre National (Paris). 2-12" discs in album (*CH-CHS-1134) \$11.90.

Discerning music lovers who are interested in Vivaldi will surely welcome warmly this outstanding recording of some his most important music. These twelve concerti were published in Amsterdam in 1728 but in the course of time the volumes of that edition disappeared. The American violinist, Louis Kaufman, in searching through the files of music in the Library of Congress found a copy and thus the present recording was possible.

"La Cetra" was dedicated to Charles VI, and it is said that the Emperor so enjoyed these charming little works that he bestowed on the composer many rich gifts and gave him more attention during a short visit than he did to his ministers in a period of a couple of years.

To listen to all of them at one sitting might be too much of a good thing, but they contain such a wealth of musical ideas, variety of rhythmic inventions, and pleasing Italian melodies that one might listen to half of them at a time without feeling surfeited.

We have nothing but praise for this pair of discs. The music itself, the playing of it, and the reproduction achieved are all of high caliber.

Vaughan Williams: Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra. Arthur Whitemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1591) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-135) \$4.67.

Some of our readers may have heard this work performed by these two talented pianists within the past year or two at concerts in several cities where they have appeared as champions of this concerto. They gave it an American premiere, with the Cincinnati Symphony under Thor Johnson in November, 1949. The music is neatly summed up in the program notes as music a contemporary generation can relish for its wryness and uncompromising economy. They also claim for it an underlying nobility and sweetness, a rugged profile, and a lofty spirit which should endear it to any listener. That last statement is going a bit far, we think, in the opinion of a majority of those "apy listeners." Our own reaction to the music is a pleasant one; we found it not too angular and dissonant, and thought it had a fine drive and continued interest. It is hardly what we expected from Vaughan Williams; but then he

is rather unpredictable, and a few years from now, it may seem like the very thing we should have expected.

Vaughan Williams sketched the first two movements of the concerto in 1926, and the third in 1930. It is dedicated to pianist Harriet Cohen. The composer re-scored the work for two pianos with the help of Joseph Cooper in 1946. In three continuous movements, the work takes about 25 minutes to play. When it first appeared in the solo version, the work stirred up a controversy because of its frequent "wayward" modulations and its dissonances, particularly in the fugue finale (because it postdated the remainder of the work by four years?). But it proved to be "right," just as another work had; the composer himself remarked of his Fourth Symphony when it was being rehearsed that "I don't know whether I like it, but that's what I meant, and it's right." Most folks will think this one is "right" too, and derive a lot of enjoyment from it.

The performing artists seem to have a deep and comprehensive knowledge of this work; there is no mistaking the authority and enthusiasm with which they invest it. Golschmann and the orchestra are right there with them, resulting in a crisp, spirited performance that does full justice to the music. The reproduction is good, completing a highly satisfactory disc. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537 ("Coronation"). Gina Bachauer (piano) with the New London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9000) \$3.99. Coupled with **Liszt**—arr. Busoni: **Rhapsodie Espagnole**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9000) \$5.72.

Liszt—arr. Busoni: **Rhapsodie Espagnole**. Gina Bachauer (piano) with the New London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman. 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1696) \$2.83. Coupled with **Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537** ("Coronation"). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9000) \$5.72.

If you want to hear some one play all the notes correctly, but with nothing else to offer, listen to this Mozart "Coronation" Concerto. Any of the other recorded versions, past or present, has more to offer the listener who has the intelligence to ask for this work on a record. This concerto has never been accorded too high a rating by Mozartians, who consider it not one of his greatest. The public, however, has always been charmed with it; and that was why it was written, to please a certain gathering. In capable hands it is a work that has appeal; this disc is not in that class. Playing efficiently, Gina Bachauer has no perceptible feeling for Mozart, no Mozartian style. It is the kind of playing that might be suitable for some biting contemporary work, but it lacks the grace necessary for Mozart. Her husband, conductor Sherman, is no Mozart specialist himself, judging from his part in the proceedings, which is very slightly better than hers. You will find the wonderful Landowska version, recently re-issued on

LP (*V-LCT-1029), more to your taste (and undoubtedly more to Mozart's). Other good versions are by Hansen and Kraus on Capitol and Vox labels.

The Liszt, being a brilliant and bravura show-piece, is more suited to the talents of the performers. After hearing the Mozart we could not get enthusiastic about anything else by this team, and since the Mozart must, perforce, accompany the purchase of this LP disc, the Liszt would have to be outstanding to make it a half worthy project. Oh well, the reproduction is good, anyhow. S.

Haydn: Concerto in D for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 101. One side, and **Boccherini: Concerto in B-flat for 'Cello and Orchestra.** Antonio Janigro (violin) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5126) \$5.95.

Haydn: Concerto in D for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 101. Walter Reichardt (violin) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. One side, and **Haydn: Sinfonia Concertante in B-flat, Op. 84.** Reinhold Barchet (violin); Siegfried Barchet (violin); Friedrich Milde (oboe); Hugo Gehring (bassoon); with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7390) \$5.95.

Haydn: Concerto in D for 'Cello and Orchestra, Op. 101. Gaspar Cassado (violin) with the Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Wolf. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385** ("Haffner"). Austrian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Wolf. 1-12" disc (*REMINGTON RLP-199-79) \$2.19.

Is it any wonder that record dealers, especially those in the smaller cities, are at their wit's end when, with the recording of Haydn's *Concerto in D, Op. 101* already in the catalog, three more appear this month? True, the early version by Oceanic with Gendron Sternberg (violin) and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra is not particularly good, but we certainly do not need three more—one good one, either the Westminster or the Vox recording listed above would be plenty. However, here they are so music lovers may make their choice.

We have listed them in the order of our preference. We think the Westminster recording is a trifle better than the Vox version, and we rather prefer the Boccherini Concerto on the reverse side to the Haydn Sinfonia on the Vox disc. The reproduction on the Remington disc is much inferior to either of the other two—of course, it is less than one-half the price, but we do not think that price is the important factor in items of this calibre. If a person is interested in such music, he is usually discerning enough to wish the best reproduction that he can get. In light music, such as popular overtures and dinner music, reproduction is not so important, and the price is often the deciding factor—not so in this instance.

Rodrigo: Concerto d'Été for Violin and Orchestra. Christian Ferras (violin) with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Georges Enesco. One side, and **Semenoff: Double Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra.** Christian Ferras (violin) and Pierre Barbizet (piano) with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ivan K. Semenov. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-546) \$5.95.

The present LP disc contains music that will be new to most American music lovers, for we doubt whether either work has ever been played in this country. . . . Joaquin Rodrigo was born in Valencia, Spain, in 1902. Because of a serious illness he became blind at the age of three. This misfortune did not prevent him from studying music in his native country and in 1927 he went to Paris to continue his studies with Paul Dukas. After twelve years in the French capital he settled in Madrid where his several orchestral works were first heard with considerable success. His *Concerto d'Été for Violin and Orchestra* dates from 1944 and while it is largely "modern" in character it is not without interest to the average liberal minded intelligent music lover. . . . Ivan K. Semenov was born in Paris in 1917. He was a student at the Paris Conservatoire and also studied composition under Arthur Honegger. Several of his works for orchestra have been performed in his native city, among the most successful of which was the present *Double Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra*. It is an interesting work in one long movement which depends for its variety upon its several moods and changing tempi. It gives the impression at first hearing of being made up of a number of things that are not particularly related; you may not care for it, but you certainly cannot say that it is dull or monotonous. We are certainly going to listen to it a time or two again when we have the time. We think it is worthy of more profound consideration.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Walter Gieseking (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4535) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488. One side, and **Franck: Variations Symphoniques.** Walter Gieseking (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4536) \$5.45.

Walter Gieseking still has a large and enthusiastic following among music lovers on this side of the Atlantic, and we feel sure that they will be pleased to know that these recordings, made in England with the Philharmonia Orchestra, are now generally available in this country. We are glad to report that these recordings have been most successfully accomplished.

Tartini: Concerto in D minor. Peter Rybar (violin) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. One side, and **Tartini: Sonata in E minor and Tartini: Sonata in E.** Peter Rybar (violin) and Franz Holletschek (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5118) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHAMBER MUSIC.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Binet: String Quartet. Petru Manoliu, Jules Joubert (violins); Louis Reisacher (viola); Fritz Moser (violinello). One side, and **Brunner: Sonata for Flute and Piano.** Andre Jaunet (flute) and Walther Frey (piano). And **Schoeck: Toccata for Piano, Op. 29.** Walther Frey (piano). 1-12" discs (*L-LL-498) \$5.95.

The idea of this LP disc is to bring to the attention of the musical world some of the music that is being presently composed in Switzerland and to introduce to listeners everywhere three living Swiss composers. Of the three, only Othmar Schoeck is listed in Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians and is probably the only one that will be known at all to American music lovers; and then he will only be known by name, for little of his music has been heard on this side of the Atlantic.

Of the three works contained on the present disc, the String Quartet by Jean Binet is of greatest importance. It is a light and graceful work and one that is quite attractive at the first hearing. However, we believe that it has enough depth to wear well and a work that one may listen to again and again with more and more enjoyment and interest. Jean Binet was born in Geneva in 1893. His first studies were at the University and at the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute. In 1919 he came to the United States and studied for several years with Bloch; then he went to Brussels for a period of six years, returning to Switzerland in 1929, where he has remained ever since. His *Danses pour Orchestre* were heard in 1938 at the Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music held in London.

Adolf Brunner was born in Zürich in 1901 but pursued his studies largely in Berlin, Paris and Italy. His music is practically unknown outside of his native Switzerland. In the present work for flute and piano the composer shows his innate modesty—there is no display of pyrotechnics. He treats both instruments equally and has developed a musical comradeship between them that is quite interesting in this meditative work of reasonable charm.

Othmar Schoeck was born in Brunen in 1886. After attending the Zürich Conservatorium he went to Leipzig to study with Max Reger. He returned to Zürich in 1911 and devoted his time to conducting and composition. In 1917 he took charge of the symphony concerts at St. Gall and remained there

until his retirement several years ago. His Toccata which fills out the second side of the present disc is a short piece of light and pleasing charm. It is not the sort of work from which one may judge with any accuracy the scope of Schoeck's musicianship.

The length of this review indicates that we can always find space for something new and interesting.

R.

Martinu: Sonata for Two Violins and Piano. One side, and **Martinu: Sonatina for Two Violins and Piano.** Willy and Margarete Schweyda (violins) and Jan Behr (piano). 1-10" disc (*UR-URLP-5004) \$4.75.

Martinu: Duo for Violin and Violoncello and Haydn: Duet in D for Violin and Violoncello. Ruth Posselt (violin) and Samuel Mayes (violoncello). One side, and **Fauré: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, Op. 108.** Ruth Posselt (violin) and Joseph Rezits (piano). 1-12" disc (*FESTIVAL FLP-70-203) \$5.45.

Of particular interest is the music of the Czech composer, Bohuslav Martinu, to be found on these records. Martinu, who was born in 1890, is certainly one of the important living composers. As yet little of his music has found its way to the recording studio, and thus the two LP discs listed above are of unusual interest to those who are students of modern music. The three works now made available are representative of this composer's work in the field of chamber music and have been recorded by able and sympathetic artists.

Mozart: Quintet in A for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581. Reginald Kell (clarinet) and the Fine Arts Quartet. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9600) \$5.85.

Mozart: Quintet in A for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581. Leopold Wlach (clarinet) and the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5112) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in A for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581. Antoine de Bavier (clarinet) and the New Italian Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-573) \$5.95.

With two recordings of Mozart's *Quintet in A, K. 581* already in the LP catalog what can we say about these three additional ones? We don't know what we can say, but we do know what we are going to say. We are entirely pleased with our copy of the Columbia recording by Benny Goodman and the American Quartet (*C-ML-4438). If that were not available we would give earnest consideration to the present Decca recording by Reginald Kell and the Fine Arts Quartet listed above.

Handel: (7) Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord, Op. 1, Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11. Julius Baker (flute) and Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-116) \$11.70.

This pair of LP discs is not for the uninitiated. One hour and twenty minutes of music for the flute

and harpsichord is more than even the most serious music lover can probably take; therefore, these Handel Sonatas, charming as they are, should be taken in small doses at infrequent intervals. By no means do we wish to speak disparagingly of the fine recordings that have been made by the two very distinguished American artists, Julius Baker and Sylvia Marlowe, but we do wish to warn our readers that these are not records to put on your automatic phonograph and let them go. They are discs that contain rare gems in the field of baroque music that should be approached with care and only when one is in the mood for such fare.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"). Nathan Milstein (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1594) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-134) \$4.67.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in G, Op. 30, No. 3.** Max Rostal (violin) and Franz Osborn (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-471) \$5.95.

As there are now three LP recordings of each of the three Beethoven Sonatas listed above available, we must be content to simply list these new ones so that our readers may know what versions are now in the current catalogs. We must say however that we were very much impressed with Milstein's rendition of the "Spring" Sonata, and we only wish that it had been placed on one side of a 12-inch disc so that one might listen to it without the bother of turning over the 10-inch LP record.

Tartini: Sonata in G minor and Tartini: Sonata in A minor. One side, and **Tartini: Sonata in B minor and Tartini: Sonata in D.** Peter Rybar (violin) and Franz Holletschek (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5141) \$5.95.

Tartini: Sonata in E minor and Tartini: Sonata in E. Peter Rybar (violin) and Franz Holletschek (harpsichord). One side, and **Tartini: Concerto in D minor.** Peter Rybar (violin) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Dahinden. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5118) \$5.95.

The celebrated violinist, Peter Rybar, offers on these two LP discs a fine selection of the music of the great 18th century Italian violin virtuoso, Giuseppe Tartini. Tartini is generally thought of as a brilliant performer and the darling of the cultured society of his native city of Padua; however, he was also a profound and able composer as the works on these discs will amply testify.



CHORAL

Vivaldi: Beatus Vir. (Sung in Latin). Chamber Choir of the State Academy of Music (Stuttgart) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7140) \$5.95.

There is a wide field in the music of Vivaldi for

enterprising recording companies. There are operas, cantatas, oratorios not to mention innumerable instrumental pieces, some of which have lain in manuscript for over 200 years. The vocal music, at least that which has been presented on records thus far, is characterized primarily by a quality that, for want of a better term, can best be described as "decent." In addition, one almost always finds in this man's music (and in nearly all Baroque music) a sense of completeness, a surety of purpose, that strikes one as novel in these days of uncertainty and change.

The work recorded here, *Beatus vir* (Blessed is the man) is typical of Vivaldi and of his times. An Olympian serenity pervades the music—there are no doubts, no misgivings. Complete faith and trust in God are the outstanding characteristics of the man and his music—and this in the face of upheavals, both spiritual and temporal, of the time. One is tempted to envy these men their obvious moral and mental strength.

This recording is a veritable gem. The music has none of the operatic quality of the *Gloria Mass* (TNR Aug. '49) but there are other outstanding attributes, notably an introspective mood that is unique. The soloists are all better than average and the string orchestra under Hans Grischkat plays with a sure sense of style that is at once convincing and suitable. Several portions of the work, particularly section 5 (*Jucundus homo qui misereatur*) are accompanied by the *continuo* organ, a delightful baroque instrument, that tootles and wheezes in superb fashion.

Intelligent notes and the complete text and translation have been supplied. In addition there is crystal clear recording, making this one of the year's better offerings. W.

Fauré: Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Suzanne Dupont (soprano); M. Didier (baritone); Edouard Commette (organ); with Les Chanteurs de Lyon and Le Trigintour Instrumental Lyonnais conducted by E. Bourmauck. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4529) \$5.45. (TNR Feb. '44).

Fauré: Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Nadine Sautereau (soprano); Bernard Demigny (baritone); Giuseppe Enghlert (organ); with the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-26) \$5.95.

The Fauré *Requiem* has long been a favorite with music lovers and those who owned the Columbia 78 rpm set (a re-issue of some eight years ago, the original probably dates back to before World War II) always felt they had a definitive performance. Now, not only has that recording been refurbished and issued on LP, but there is a new performance and recording by Oceanic.

Briefly, this *Requiem* is the work of a man whose genius was essentially non-dramatic. It is of interest to note in this connection that the *Dies Irae* has been omitted. The music is serene, calm and confident. Dynamically the score is on a uniformly low

level, movement succeeds movement with little contrast, the result is that emphasis is thrown on the text, the music serving only to underscore the words. All this, of course, is in direct contrast to the scores of Berlioz and Verdi, to mention but two other men's settings, and it is unusual in the work of a relatively "modern" composer—the score dates from 1887 when Fauré was in his 45th year.

The performances by the Chanteurs de Lyon needs little comment—it is a beautiful job, one that wears well and pursues its unruffled course in a tranquil and sedate manner. The presentation on Oceanic Records, by the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus under René Leibowitz follows much the same pattern, the points of difference would be of interest only to Fauré specialists. The soloists, Mlle. Sautereau and M. Demigny, have adequate, if in no way exceptional, voices and the work is developed in a reverent and sincere fashion.

The recording of the Columbia set is surprisingly fine considering its age. Columbia engineers have done a marvelous job in the transfer, Oceanic's recording is, as one might expect, a shade more brilliant, but there is not the difference between them one would expect from the time elapsed. Columbia supplies excellent notes and the text; Oceanic, short and biased notes and the text. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 201 ("Der Streit zwischen Phoebus und Pan"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Bach Guild Choir and Orchestra conducted by Helmut Koch. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-514) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 205 ("Der zufriedengestellte Aeolus"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Bach Guild Choir and Orchestra conducted by Helmut Koch. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-515) \$5.95.

This month comes a new issue by Bach Guild (Vanguard). These *Cantatas* date from the period 1729-1736 when Bach was directing the Telemann Collegium Musicum, a society that presented weekly concerts for music lovers—one of the earliest of such new music making enterprises—concerts for secular audiences in an independent concert hall.

The first of these works, *Phoebus and Pan*, relates the story of a contest of song between the two that is judged by Midas who is rewarded by a pair of asses ears. Some commentators feel Bach was taking sly revenge on Johann Adolf Scheibe (one of Bach's severest critics in Leipzig) in this episode. The other piece, *Aeolus Appeased*, is even lighter in weight, being a glorified birthday cantata. Both are written to texts by Picander and for them Bach has written charming but, for him, somewhat superficial music.

Helmut Koch directs with a heavy hand and very little imagination. The vocalists are not noteworthy for the light touch either, making the net result disappointing. In addition the singers have only ordinary voices—by no stretch of the imagination could they be classed as \$5.95 per record artists.

The recording, usually fine on Vanguard releases,

is only so-so in the *Phoebus and Pan*, the choral passages being blurred and the vocal portions on the fuzzy side. *Aeolus Appeased* fares somewhat better technically. Bach Guild has supplied brief notes and complete German-English texts. W.



OPERA

Rossini: *Guglielmo Tell* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Graziella Sciutti, Rosanna Carteri (sopranos); Miti Truccato Pace (mezzo-soprano) Mario Filippeschi (tenor); Giuseppe Taddei (baritone); Fernando Corena (basso); with supporting soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 4-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1232) \$23.80.

Rossini's "cumbersome but magnificent masterpiece" *Guglielmo Tell* is given its first "complete" recording by Cetra. Now, for the first time since 1931, music lovers have the opportunity to hear this memorable work. In its original version it consisted of five acts and lasted for about six hours. The recorded performance has been cut to somewhere between three and one-half to four hours. No mention is made of what excisions were made but the presentation is a reasonably coherent one.

Cetra's casting is again excellent. In the title role, the excellent baritone Giuseppe Taddei turns in an outstanding performance. Vocally he is superb, singing with rare understanding and polish. The moving prayer *Resta immobile* is delivered in moving fashion. Rosanna Carteri is the Mathilda and her singing is distinguished by its smoothness and fine expression. To Mario Filippeschi falls the task of singing the difficult role of Arnold. The *tessitura* of the part lies extremely high, calling for what has been described as "a leather-lunged tenor." Filippeschi hits all the high notes, not an inconsiderable feat, and if some of the top ones are not altogether musical it can easily be forgiven. The wonderful duet from the first act *Ah, Mathilde, io t'amo* is magnificent music and it is stirringly and accurately sung by Filippeschi and Taddei. Walther Furst, as sung by Giorgio Tozzi, is a sound, workman-like job. In the minor roles Miti Truccato Pace as Hedwiga and Fernando Corena as the tyrant Gessler are outstanding.

Mario Rossi, in this reviewer's opinion one of the finest operatic conductors of his day, adds to his laurels with a superb directorial job. His reading of the overture (an inspired piece of music, by the way) is refreshing—it is just played as written and is marvelously effective. The choruses are notable for purity of tone and coloring.

William Tell deserves a wide hearing, for again, through the medium of records, one is given an opportunity to hear a neglected masterpiece by a well-known composer. And, incidentally, one of the assets of the set is an exceedingly fine new transla-

tion of the libretto by Max de Schauensee. Mr. Schauensee also supplies interesting and informative notes on the opera. The recording is uniformly good. W.

Famous Operatic Excerpts. (Sung in French and Italian). Giacinto Prandelli, Tomaso Spaturo, Ferrando Ferrari (tenors); Raphael Arie, Fernando Corena (bassos); with the Orchestra of Santa Cecilia (Rome) and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-534) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *L'Elisir d'Amore*—Una furtiva lagrima; *La Gioconda*—Cielo e mar; *Don Pasquale*—Povera Ernesto: Cercherò lontana terra; *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Tombe degl'avvi miei: Fra poco a me ricovero (Sung by Giacinto Prandelli). *Faust*—Mais ce Dieu, que peut-il pour moi (Sung by Raphael Arie and Tomaso Spaturo). *Andrea Chenier*—Un di all'azzurro spazio (Sung by Ferrando Ferrari). *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*—A un dottor della mia sorte (Sung by Fernando Corena).

Such a collection of operatic excerpts as is gathered together here usually leaves a nondescript impression. The styles, if different, are usually hard to reconcile and when the style is the same the result is prone to be monotonous. Yet this disc is neither a hodge-podge nor is it tiresome. The answer as to its success lies entirely in the artistry of the singers. Each piece is presented whole-heartedly, as though it were a new work and the resulting performance has a freshness that is very engaging.

Giacinto Prandelli is a past master in *bel canto* and his singing of *Una furtiva lagrima* is beautiful to hear. In the same class is his carefully considered phrasing and expression in the *Lucia* excerpt. The aria *Cielo e mar* is lyrically sung as opposed to the dramatic and the result, while a little unusual, is still effective. The *Don Pasquale* scene is a little dull but one feels that the fault lies in the music rather than with the singer. All in all it is a remarkable performance.

Side two is an even more striking example of how sheer artistry can weld dissimilar styles into a convincing whole. The side begins with the *Contract Scene* from "Faust". This is splendidly sung by Tomaso Spaturo (whoever he might be) and Raphael Arie. Sgr. Spaturo is always convincing and his French is very good. Arie is a sonorous and devilish Mephistopheles. Taken as a performance it is the best this reviewer has heard on records since the superb Anseau-Journet recording of 1930. One can offer no higher praise. This is followed by the aria *Un di all'azzurro spazio*, sung with feeling and talent by Ferrando Ferrari, a young tenor with a fine voice and lots of spirit. The last item, *A un dottor della mia sorte*, receives a virtually perfect performance by the experienced buffo, Fernando Corena. His is a more polished account of the music than Baccaioni gives, but both are good.

Alberto Erede supplies much of the drive and polish that make the record one the best single LP operatic discs to date. W.

Verdi: Rigoletto (complete). (Sung in German). Erna Berger (soprano); Margarete Klose (contralto); Helge Roswaenge (tenor); Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone); Josef Greindl (basso); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera conducted by Robert Heger. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-222) \$11.90.

This is the third complete recording of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. The RCA-Victor set (TNR Nov. '50) still remains the finest from virtually all angles but there is much of interest in this performance. The chief drawback (and, incidentally, to this reviewer, the fatal flaw) is the use of a German translation.

Vocally, this set is potentially the best extant. Erna Berger is, of course—Erna Berger. Her Gilda is a superb creation, virtually unequalled in this or any other era. She is in fine voice here and the characterization is flawless. Of considerable interest is the Rigoletto of Heinrich Schlusnus. His interpretation, while orthodox, is distinguished by a manly quality, a dignity that lifts it above the ordinary run of Rigolettos. Vocally, of course, Schlusnus is equal to all occasions. Helge Roswaenge, a truly great tenor, is an imperious Duke. Despite some mannerisms of voice production, Roswaenge is a magnificent singing actor due to his ability to color a phrase and the almost uncanny manner in which he conveys his emotions. Also worthy of mention are Josef Greindl, a thrilling Monterone, Georg Hann, a sinister Sparafucile and Margarete Klose, a coquettish Maddelena.

The production, under the capable baton of Robert Heger, is well paced and dramatically convincing. Tempi are generally good with the exception of the second act finale (*St, vendetta*) which is invariably taken too fast, and is speeded up here thus spoiling some of the effect. The first and last act finales (among the greatest in all opera) are magnificent.

The recording is only fair, even poor in spots. One suspects an old tape (Hann has been dead for two years) and Urania, in its desire for economy has crowded the opera on four LP sides; a dubious practice this, for the quality of recorded sound, none too good to start with, deteriorates even further as a result. A German-English libretto is included. W.

Goetz: The Taming of the Shrew. (complete). (Sung in German). Elfriede Trötschel, Margarete Teschemacher (sopranos); Matthieu Ahlersmeyer (baritone); Gottlob Frick (basso); with supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Dresden State Opera conducted by Karl Elmendorff. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-221) \$18.50.

Hermann Goetz who, in his short lifetime (he died at the age of 36) carved an enviable place for himself in the history of music, has not been repre-

sented on records in this country to any appreciable degree. The *Taming of the Shrew* is his most ambitious work and it enjoyed a degree of popularity in the 80's and 90's. It was first produced at Mannheim on 11 October 1874 and has not been given at the Metropolitan. Bernard Shaw wrote favorably concerning the work and Alfred Einstein ranks it with Cornelius' *Barbiere von Bagdad* and Wolf's *Der Corregedor* (a very shrewd estimate).

A competent cast of singers, headed by Margarete Teschemacher and Mathieu Ahlersmeyer, do well without much inspiration. The direction is most likely at fault for it verges on the pedestrian at times and is always heavy-handed. The recording is definitely on the inferior side and this is acknowledged by Urania, who admit the fact in an enclosure. Indeed, the recorded sound is so poor that it is difficult to appraise the voices with any degree of certainty. Margarete Teschemacher seems to be in fine fettle while Gottlob Frick as Hortensio is excellent. Mathieu Ahlersmeyer is an edgy sort of baritone at best, seemingly straining all the time—it is a tiring kind of voice that is not helped by the recording. The others in the cast are adequate.

Musically, the piece is, on the whole, fresh and youthful, with some Wagnerian overtones. The plot, of course, is the familiar one and the setting is dramatically convincing. Curiously, and this in spite of the fact that this reviewer is no proponent of opera in English (rather the reverse) one feels that the work would gain immeasurably if given a well prepared (not smart aleckey) English libretto. A lighter touch on the part of both singers and orchestra would then make it a valuable addition to the standard repertory.

This is definitely a set that must be heard before purchasing because of its technical failings and limitations. An English-German libretto is supplied. W.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Fernanda Cadoni (soprano); Giulietta Simionato, Liliana Pellegrino (mezzo-sopranos); Achille Braschi (tenor); Carlo Tagliabue (baritone); with the Chorus and Orchestra of CETRA (Turin) conducted by Arturo Basile. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1233) \$11.90.

In view of the popularity of Mascagni's perennial thriller *Cavalleria Rusticana*, one often overlooks the considerable historical significance of the work. It was the first of the *verismo* school of opera, a school that later fostered such pieces as *Andrea Chenier*, *Fedora*, along with works by Puccini and Cilea. The original tale, a novel of the same name by Giovanni Verga, was transformed into a libretto by several of Mascagni's friends. They did a remarkable job, for the book is almost unequalled among libretti for its terseness and dramatic impact. Mascagni was also uncommonly successful in his musical setting and the resultant opera has long been an

artistic as well as a popular favorite.

Top performer in an all around fine cast is Guilettia Simionato. Hers is one of the best voices on records today and her characterization of the distraught Santuzza is commendable in all respects. The duet with Turridu and the familiar *Voi lo sapete, o Mama* are expertly sung. It is of interest to note that the old Victor set of this opera, issued back in the early Thirties, has the same Guilettia Simionato in the minor role of Mama Lucia. Considerable interest attaches to the recording début of Achille Braschi, as Turridu. He reveals a rather small voice of considerable range and is generally pleasing. He indulges in none of the objectionable vocal idiosyncrasies common among tenors of all nationalities. In his final aria *Mama, quel vino e generoso* he achieves genuine dramatic feeling and rounds out his performance in a blaze of glory. Carlo Tagliabue, as Alfie, is effective but his voice shows the ravages of time.

Arturo Basile directs orchestra and chorus in expert fashion. The choruses in particular are beautifully sung and with a degree of expression not usually found in operatic performances. The recording is about the best Cetra has yet given us. The chief competition for this set comes from the Victor recording directed by the composer. The present recording, in addition to being technically superior is also more dramatic. It would be difficult to imagine a more satisfactory presentation.

W.

VOCAL



Mozart: (5) Concert Arias for Soprano and Contralto. (Sung in German and Italian). Käthe Nentwig (soprano) and Ruth Michaelis (contralto) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7370) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Ombra felice: Io ti lascio*, K. 255; *Ah, lo previdi*, K. 272; *Ch'io mi scordi de te: Non temer, amato bene*, K. 505; *Bella mia fiamma, addio: Resta, oh cara*, K. 528; *Nehmt meinen Dank, ihr holden Gönner*, K. 383.

An Erna Berger Song Recital. Erna Berger (soprano) accompanied by George Schick (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1589) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-133) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Das Veilchen*, K. 476; *Dans un bois solitaire*, K. 308; *Warnung*, K. 433; *Der Zauberer*, K. 472; *Abendempfindung*, K. 523 (Mozart). *Heidenröslein*, Op. 3, No. 3 (Schubert).

Mozart was first and foremost a composer for voice and even his orchestral music, as Alfred Einstein has pointed out, has a vocal line. It was a custom in his time (and, incidentally, one he must have enjoyed) to write "concert arias" for various singers and Mozart wrote no less than 57 such works. The words could be, and usually were, taken from

some other opera. Vox issues five such arias, one for contralto (the only one he wrote for the alto voice) and four for soprano.

Ombre felice K. 255 is a version of Aeneas' farewell to Dido and it is exquisitely sung by Ruth Michaels, a youthful alto with a lovely voice and excellent sense of style. The soprano arias are well sung by Käthe Nentwig, a somewhat less gifted singer but who, nevertheless, by virtue of a real feeling for the music, manages to be convincing. It is interesting to note the inclusion of the famous aria *Bella mia fiamma, addio*, K. 528 written for Josefa Duschek who was reported to have locked Mozart in a room until he had written the long promised aria. It is a magnificent example of Mozart's superlative genius. The sound is beautifully recorded and excellent notes are supplied.

Miss Berger essays five Mozart *lieder* and sings them in her usual impeccable fashion. The only one that did not please this corner was, of all things, *Das Veilchen*. This is strictly a matter of personal taste, one hastens to say. The song is really not a song at all, but a miniature operatic *scena*; Miss Berger only gives it *lieder* treatment. The others, including the Schubert, are more in the song category and are delightful.

The only complaint is the relatively short (18 mins.) duration of the disc. It is the equivalent of three 10" records (78 rpm) and to charge \$4.67 seems a bit on the steep side. It is not intended as any disrespect to Miss Berger to suggest that the record is much overpriced.

W.

Schönberg: Erwartung, Op. 17 ("Expectation"). (Sung in German). Dorothy Dow (soprano) with the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Křenek: Symphonic Elegy for String Orchestra**. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4524) \$5.45.

This record demonstrates far more forcibly than several volumes of words the tremendous growth the phonograph has made since Edison invented his "toy" over fifty years ago. The growth has been artistic as well as technical and the artistic maturity of the phonograph has been due largely to the demand of lovers of serious music. And, while one may not be personally sympathetic to Schönberg, Křenek, von Webern *et al*, it is a source of deep satisfaction to find record companies issuing such records, for it is a limited field at best.

Schönberg's *Erwartung* ("Expectation") is an experimental work and, although written in 1909, still remains one of the "most sensational essays in modern music from the point of view of pure strangeness of sound" (Lambert). There is in this music, moreover, what one commentator describes as an "almost flame-like disgust, a fierce despair that places it above the water color morbidities of his

chosen text." Dorothy Dow, Dimitri Mitropolis and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, aided and abetted by sterling recording deliver the music in exemplary fashion.

Coupled with *Erwartung* is a *Symphonic Elegy* by a pupil of Schönberg's, Ernest Křenek, written in memoriam of another pupil, Anton von Webern. This, too, is dissonant music; but it lacks the bite and drive of *Erwartung*. Křenek is a romanticist, just as romantic in his way as Marschner but, like most writers in post-war (World War I) Europe, instead of crying for the moon, he seems to ask the way to the nearest bar. The sense of frustration is the same in all events. An expert performance is given by the redoubtable Mitropoulos and his musicians.

One gets the impression that music has taken a wrong turning here, much the same as the fish (the lung-fish, *protopterus annectens*) in Africa that grew lungs so as to be able to live both in and out of the water only to wind up living almost exclusively in the mud.

An English text is supplied for *Erwartung* but little or no explanatory notes are given for either work. Recording, in both instances, is remarkably clean and crisp, lending a sense of realism to the performances. W.

Songs and Duets by Schumann and Schubert.

(Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano); Margarete Klose (contralto); Peter Anders, Karl Erb (tenors); Wilhelm Strienz (basso); with piano accompaniments by Michael Raucheisen and Herman Reuter. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7047) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Märzveilchen*, *Schneeglöckchen*, *Wiegenlied*, *Unter'm Fenster*, *Familiengemälde*, *Kartenlegerin*, *Lust der Sturmnacht*, *Frühlingsnacht* (Schumann); *Heimliches Lieben*, *Hoffnung*, *Der Jüngling*, *Nachstück*, *Tischlied*, *Tischlerlied*, *Der Goldschmiedegesell* (Schubert).

Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42. (Sung in German). Elisabeth Höngen (alto) with Ferdinand Leitner (piano). One side, and **Loewe: Edward and Loewe: Der Nöck.** Josef Greindl (basso) with Hertha Klust (piano). And **Loewe: Odins Meeresritt** and **Loewe: Meeresleuchten.** Georg Hann (basso) with Ferdinand Leitner (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9610) \$5.85.

These are two curious records, veritable hodgepodes, that contain some gold amid lots of base metal.

The Urania is a combination of songs and duets by Schumann and Schubert. The artists are among the finest in Europe today but even all Lemnitz's artistry can not infuse any real life into such dull songs as *Märzveilchen* or *Schneeglöckchen*. She is joined by the capable Peter Anders in three duets; but since the music is of the same general calibre, the net result is the same. The last three *lieder* are sung by Margarete Klose, an opulent voiced mezzo, but again the artist is superior to her material. Many

of the Schubert songs will be new to most listeners and are, generally, on a much higher level artistically. Especially fine, musically, are *Hoffnung*, *Nachstück*, and *Der Jüngling an die Quelle*; but unfortunately they are sung by an aging Karl Erb who sounds almost ancient in *Hoffnung* (so does the recording, positively acoustical). Herr Strienz's sonorous basso is heard in three *lieder*—a drinking song that is effective, a *Carpenter's Song* which is fair and a song about a goldsmith's apprentice that is not much. The mixture of music and singers leaves an indiscriminate impression and to add to the general confusion, the recording is uneven.

Decca also offers a "problem" record. The Loewe *Ballads* are superb music and, on this disc, magnificently sung. It is doubtful if there is a better basso around than Josef Greindl. In *Edward* he is convincing, almost unbelievably so, and in *Der Nöck* (*The Water-Sprite*) he sings in amazing fashion, taking low B's with ease and making them sound musical. The late Georg Hann, while not gifted to the extent Herr Greindl is, does beautifully with two wonderful ballads, especially *Meeresleuchten* which is a little gem. The problem of the record is the other side—the fourth recording of Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*. One can only report that Elisabeth Höngen sings well and wish that the space had been devoted to more Loewe *Ballads*. Good recording on the Decca, but no texts. Texts furnished by Urania. W.

Message: Monsieur Beaucaire (abridged operetta).

(Sung in French). Soloists with the Raymond St. Paul Chorus and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. 1-12" discs (*VX-PL-20300) \$5.95.

Christine: Phi-Phi (abridged operetta). (Sung in French). Soloists with women's chorus and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Marcel Cariven. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20400) \$5.95.

Continuing its series of French light opera (and musical comedy) recordings, Vox issues this month Messenger's *Monsieur Beaucaire* and Christine's *Phi-Phi*.

The former is a graceful and charming work, in the *genre* made popular by Victor Herbert and Oskar Straus. Tuneful, melodious and essentially French, it follows, with reasonable verisimilitude Booth Tarkington's story. The cast is excellent, featuring such able singers as Michel Dens in the title role, Martha Angelicci as Lady Mary Carlisle and Gilbert-Morin as Lord Winterset (called "Winterset" in this performance). Curiously the original book was in English, written by no less a personage than Frederick Lonsdale; but the libretto was re-written in French by Rivoire and Verben for the Paris première in 1925. Messenger made the necessary alterations in the vocal line and it is an abridged version of this score that has been recorded.

Phi-Phi is the nick-name for the famous Greek

sculptor Phidias and is more essentially musical comedy than operetta. It is in a direct line with Offenbach's works but shows none of the genius and general *élan* that characterized his magnificent satires. The story is based on Greek mythology and has the usual Gallic twist—a young girl, being courted ardently by Phidias, defends herself with an umbrella and in the general excitement breaks the arms off the Venus di Milo and severs the head from the Victory of Samothrace! The cast is well chosen but the names of the singers mean little in this case. Bourvil, as Phi-Phi, sounds somewhat like an elderly and debauched Maurice Chevalier and the other members acquit themselves creditably.

Somewhat obscure notes are furnished and first-class recording is supplied. Musically the records have little value, but as examples of their type they are perfect.

W.

American Folk Music (Vol. I: Ballads). Vocalists with various instrumental accompaniments. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLKWAYS FP-251) \$11.90.

American Folk Music (Vol. II: Social Music). Vocalists with various instrumental accompaniments. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLKWAYS FP-252) \$11.90.

American Folk Music (Vol. III: Songs). Vocalists with various instrumental accompaniments. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLKWAYS FP-253) \$11.90.

These three volumes contain eighty-six selections in the realm of American Folk Music. The first volume contains 27 ballads; the second, 29 selections mostly folk dances played by an old-time fiddler or by various combinations of instruments; and the last volume contains 28 songs. We do not know why the pieces in the first volume are called ballads and those in the third volume are called songs; we can see no difference in the character of the selections.

All of the recordings that have been transferred to these LP discs were made between 1927 and 1932 and originally appeared as single 78 rpm records under Victor, Columbia, Brunswick, Okeh, Paramount, Vocalion and other labels popular at that time. In the comprehensive booklet that accompanies each volume complete label information of each recording is given—the original manufacturer's name and record number, the name of the selection and the artists who recorded it. In addition the date of the recording is given and a brief description of the selection itself.

The aim of the compilers of this collection of American Folk Music is to preserve for all time the music that sprang from the hearts of the common people of our nation, especially those folks both white and black located in the southeast and southern sections of the United States. No recordings are included that were made after 1932 because authentic folk renditions were desired, ones that were not influenced by the effect of the radio or talking pic-

tures, neither of which reached the hinterlands of these sections until after that time. As one peruses the booklet, he cannot help realizing the great amount of research required to bring this project to fruition. Just to locate the original records and to find copies that were in sufficiently good condition to warrant dubbing must have been a tremendous task in itself. We are happy to report that the job has been well and skillfully done and those persons who are interested in the history and development of American Folk Music owe a great debt of thanks to Folkways Records.

R.

Richard Tauber Sings Lieder. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with piano and orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9547) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48 (Schumann); *Der Nussbaum*, Op. 25, No. 3 (Schumann); *Mondnacht*, Op. 39, No. 5 (Schumann); *Heidenröslein*, Op. 3, No. 3 (Schubert); *Die Lorelei* (Silcher); *Die Lotusblume*, Op. 25, No. 7 (Schumann); *Ein Traum*, Op. 48, No. 6 (Grieg); *Fruhlingsglaube*, Op. 20, No. 2 (Schubert); *Eros*, Op. 70, No. 1 (Grieg); *Ungeduld*, Op. 25, No. 7 (Schubert); *Ständchen*, Op. 17, No. 2 (R. Strauss).

Richard Tauber Favorites. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9597) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Mattinata* (Leoncavallo); *La Paloma* (Yradier); *Santa Lucia* (Cottrau); *Farewell, Corsica* (Pinozzi); *Serenata* (Toselli); *Gypsy Love* (Lehar); *Liebesleid und Liebesfreud* (Kreisler); *Rokoko Love Song* (Meyer-Helmund); *Speak to Me of Love* (Lenoir); *Plaisir d'amour* (Martini); *Tränen weint jede Frau so gern* (Rotter); *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* (Liszt).

The late Richard Tauber's host of admirers here in the United States will be glad to know, we are sure, that Decca has taken a series of his earlier recordings and placed them on the two LP discs listed above. The transfer from 78 rpm to LP has been most successfully accomplished so that no one may have any concern on that score.

ORGAN



Bach: Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor. One side, and **Bach: Concerto in A minor** ("Vivaldi"). Carl Weinrich (organ). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-98) \$3.

Bach: (6) Trio Sonatas. Helmut Walcha (organ). 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-114) \$11.70.

One of the most thrilling and most beautiful pieces of music you hear played on the organ is the Vivaldi *Concerto in A minor* as transcribed for organ by Bach. The original is the eighth in the Opus 3, or *L'Estro armonico*, series of concerti grossi by

Vivaldi. The first and third movements are light and gay and bristling with brilliant display passages—but musical ones that are part of the interesting musical picture. The middle movement has a haunting, long-lined melody that is treated tenderly, providing a fine contrast for the outer movements. Weinrich plays this work splendidly, with fine technique and a nice regard for the fragile second movement. He also does a masterly job with the well worn *Passacaglia*, indulging in no personal capers of his own, but presenting an honest and admirably paced version of Bach's music. The organ used is that in the Princeton University Chapel, and except for a few times when the mutations nearly kill the pitch line with "baroquetry," the sounds which come from the disc are good. At its price the disc is a fine value indeed.

Decca's "Archive Series," which purposes to fill the gap which exists in the recorded repertoire extending from music of the earliest times to music of the middle of the 18th century, initiates a survey of the Bach organ literature with this album of Trio Sonatas. Allegro has issued the six sonatas on three separate LP discs, two per disc. Decca offers the six on two LP's with several pages of informative notes, all bound in a box-type album. Decca has for the performing artist, Helmut Walcha, a blind German organist closely associated with the Bach traditions. He uses baroque organs exclusively and is an authority on the subject. The organs used for this album are those of St. Jakobi Church, Lubeck, and the Schnitger organ at Capell. His technique and performances of the Trio Sonatas would be called admirable by any expert, amateur or professional, of Bach's music. We are not very fond of the extreme type of baroque organ used, for its squeaks and squeals soon pall; but there are many who feel this is the authentic way to play the music. As music itself, the Trio Sonatas are no fountain of entertainment for the public at large. This music on a baroque organ is just plain boring to all except the most rabid fanciers of the art. If you appreciate it, the Decca set will appeal to you even more than the admirable Robert Noehren series on Allegro. Decca's reproduction is excellent. S.

HARPSICHORD

Scarlatti: (12) Sonatas (Vol. III). Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5139) \$5.95.

Rameau: Suite in A minor. One side, and **Rameau: Suite in E minor.** Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5128) \$5.95.

The brilliant young harpsichordist, Fernando Valenti, continues with his recordings of the Scarlatti Sonatas. As the first two volumes of this series were so well received, it is expected that this new

one will also prove to be highly acceptable to those interested in this sterling artist and his instrument. . . . For a little variety this month Mr. Valenti offers a disc containing two Rameau Suites. As very little of the music of this famous 18th century French composer is available on LP discs, this record, containing much lovely music beautifully played and recorded, should not be overlooked by discerning music lovers.

PIANO



Debussy: (12) Preludes (Book I). Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4537) \$5.45.

Debussy: (12) Preludes (Book II). Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4538) \$5.45.

Debussy: The Children's Corner Suite. One side, and **Debussy: Suite Bergamasque.** Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4539) \$5.45.

Schumann: Kinderscenen, Op. 15. One side, and **Brahms: (3) Intermezzis, Op. 117.** Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4540) \$5.45.

With these new recordings Gieseking's host of admirers on this side of the Atlantic may have a very fine two and a half hour concert by that great pianist. All of the selections on these LP discs are ones which Mr. Gieseking has often played in concerts in this country. They are the sort of pieces that give this great pianist ample opportunity to display his romantic and poetic genius. In listening to these recordings it is difficult not to come under the spell of this truly unique and superb artist.

Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin. One side, and **Ravel: Sonatine** and **Chabrier: Idylle** and **Chabrier: Bourrée Fantasque.** Kathleen Long (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-452) \$5.95.

Scarlatti: Sonatas (Vol. II). Kathleen Long (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-524) \$4.95.

The celebrated English pianist, Kathleen Long, has a large following among record collectors here in America, and thus we are sure that the two discs listed above will enjoy a reasonable popularity. The selections have been played in Miss Long's usual meticulous manner and have been splendidly recorded by London.

DICTION



The Voice of FDR. Excerpts from his speeches with Quentin Reynolds (narrator) and chorus and orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9628) \$5.85.

Quentin Reynolds has selected excerpts from the speeches of Franklin Roosevelt delivered during the years from 1932 until 1945 and joined them together with a running commentary. For those who would

like to remember the outstanding things that FDR said during his time as president, this splendidly produced record will be of prime value.

Selections from the Writings of Dylan Thomas.

Dylan Thomas (reader). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1002) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Fern Hill; A Child's Christmas in Wales; Do not go gentle; In the White Giant's Thigh; Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait; Ceremony After a Fire Raid.*

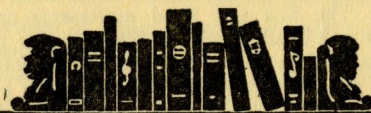
In the British poet, Dylan Thomas, we have a writer who can read as well as write. In fact it would seem to us that we would enjoy hearing Mr. Thomas read most anything; just to hear his well modulated voice and appreciate his fine sense of the meaning of what he is reading is indeed fascinating. It is said that Thomas' poems are meant to be heard rather than read, for only by hearing them can one get the full sense of their meaning. It is therefore good to have Mr. Thomas select a group of his poems and read them for us as he does on this well-recorded LP disc.

Many Americans will be familiar with Thomas *A Child's Christmas in Wales* because it appeared in the Christmas 1950 issue of Harper's Bazaar; the other poems may be new to many readers on this side of the Atlantic and thus the present disc gives us a fine opportunity to become acquainted with them in a most ideal manner.

Ike from Abilene. Henry Fonda (narrator) with orchestra conducted by Bernard Green. 1-12" disc (*ABBEY LP-6) \$2.98.

The Second Elizabeth. David Niven (narrator) with orchestra conducted by Bernard Green. 1-12" disc (*ABBEY LP-4) \$5.95.

There seems to be a small but insistent demand for documentary recordings; it has been growing gradually during the last several years. Perhaps these two splendid examples of this unique art (for to make a good documentary recording is a painstaking and highly skillful art) will accelerate the demand for such records. If they don't, we certainly do not know what would. They have everything. Their subjects are two of the world's leading figures, whose names are continually on everyone's tongue. The texts have been carefully prepared with a fine sense of news value, the recordings have been skillfully directed, appropriate musical backgrounds have been supplied, and two fine actors, Henry Fonda and David Niven, were chosen as narrators. Certainly no one could ask for more. Their success or failure is now in the hands of the final judge—the record buying public.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Overtures, Tone Poems and Other Orchestral Works. By Charles O'Connell. xix + 614 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Colosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hodyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 88 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
♠ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 7

SEPTEMBER, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

COLUMBIA announces a limited first edition of a series of recordings of the Casals Festival at Perpignan consisting of 2,000 individually numbered sets. The set consists of twelve 12-inch LP records (see detailed list at the end of this article) plus a special disc containing a recording of Casals rehearsing the Festival orchestra. These thirteen records will be housed in a dark red simulated leather box embossed in gilt, and with the set will be included a large four-page nicely printed booklet containing candid pictures of the artists at the Festival. The price is \$75 (postpaid within U.S.A.) and reservations may be placed with the publishers of THE NEW RECORDS.

Those persons not interested in the limited first edition may purchase any of the records in the following list at \$5.45 each. The special record of the orchestral rehearsal conducted by Casals is not for sale separately.

Mozart: Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525. One side; and **Mozart Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201.** Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4551) \$5.45.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 364. Isaac Stern (violin) and William Primrose (viola) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4552) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 219 ("Turkish"). Erica Morini (violin) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4553) \$5.45.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 11 in D, K. 251. Marcel Tabuteau (oboe) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet in F, K. 370.** Marcel Tabuteau (oboe); Isaac Stern (violin); William Primrose (viola); Paul Tortelier (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4554) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Trio No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 11. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio No. 6 in E-flat, Op. 70, No. 2.** Eugene Istomin (piano); Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4559) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2. Pablo Casals (violin) and Rudolph Serkin (piano). One side, and **Beethoven: (7) Variations in E-flat on "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen"** and **Beethoven: (12) Variations in F on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen," Op. 66.** Pablo Casals (violin) and Rudolph Serkin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4560) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Trio No. 2 in G, Op. 1, No. 2. Eugene Istomin (piano); Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4561) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Trio No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 97 ("Archduke"). Eugene Istomin (piano); Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4562) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in G, K. 313. John Wummer (flute) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 14 in E-flat, K. 449.** Eugene Istomin (piano) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4555) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 9 in E-flat, K. 271 ("Jeune homme"). Dame Myra Hess (piano) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4556) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 22 in E-flat, K. 482. Rudolph Serkin (piano) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4557) \$5.45.

Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595. Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4558) \$5.45.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of

these may be had at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.)

ORCHESTRA



Dvořák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4541) \$5.45.

Dvořák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 46—(Nos. 1 to 4). Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. One side, and **Borodin: Prince Igor**—Polovtsian Dances. RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9546) \$5.85.

The major companies are really crowding each other with "New World" recordings. In the April 1952 issue we reviewed the Jorda-London Symphony version (*L-LL-432) and in July the Kubelik-Chicago (*ME-MG-50002), and liked them both but stated a strong preference for Ormandy or Stokowski. Columbia throws in some competition for its own Ormandy disc with this new one by Szell. Szell is well remembered for a recording of some years ago on Victor 78 rpm, which he made with the Czech Philharmonic. As for his present set, it is very fine, but does not dislodge the Ormandy recording—or several others—from our affections. Szell takes the second movement nice and slow and with depth of feeling; he does this as well as anyone else on discs. The Philadelphia Orchestra, however, makes prettier music than the Cleveland in this second movement and for that matter, in all the rest of the symphony. The Philadelphians have no peer for orchestral eloquence, precise ensemble and magnificent tone, and in this thrice-familiar work, that counts for a lot. Ormandy's interpretation is very good, straight and sensible, and his orchestra is gorgeous—what more could be needed in this symphony? Therefore theirs is still tops. Stokowski runs them a close second, and some may prefer it despite a few mannerisms. The Kubelik recording is a high fidelity Mercury disc and is superb—the best of all "New World" recordings if fidelity is your chief interest. Jorda has exceptional fidelity also, but the London Symphony is not perfect, and neither are a few of Jorda's ideas; it is generally good, and our criticisms are admittedly based on small matters. Szell has been accorded very brilliant reproduction, and he drives his orchestra very hard; hard enough to notice it in the last two movements. We would advise hearing this disc before buying it.

Decca's disc with the Borodin and Dvořák coupling is excellent in every way. Rieger handles the *Slavonic Dances* well, easily meeting any other recorded versions. Fricsay's performance of the *Polovtsian Dances* is the equal of anything else on discs except Stokowski's, who uses voices. For an all-orchestral version, Fricsay's is one of the best ever recorded. The reproduction and surfaces of this

Decca disc are exemplary.

S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 31 in D, K. 297** ("Paris"). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-542) \$5.95.

Mozart: Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525. Four sides, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G** ("Surprise"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WHMY-1018) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMY-1018) \$5.95.

The fastidious Josef Krips fares mighty well with this pair of Mozart symphonies; we like them better than some he has done. The No. 39 receives a notably fine reading, not overblown, not too fast and furious, but with plenty of strength and drive. It is an excellent performance and about as good as you will find on LP's. The "Paris" meets stiff competition from Beecham (*C-ML-4474) who displays his extraordinary wit and way with Mozart. Beecham's disc is coupled with the Schubert "Unfinished" Symphony which may help you determine whether you prefer Krips or Beecham. London has beautifully clear reproduction of lovely quality, completing this successful disc which we recommend highly.

RCA Victor's issue of HMV recordings domestically shows an unevenness in recording quality, of which the present Haydn-Mozart disc is a good example. Some of the HMV's suffer from having been originally recorded on 78 masters, yielding a uniformly uneven quality on LP. Several have had inherent noise, not necessarily surface noise. This one is still different, suffering from a lack of bass on the Mozart side—a curious fault for any English discs, which usually are heavy on bass. The Haydn is much better in this respect.

Furtwängler plays the *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* admirably, with a charming lightness and grace. He does the final movement in the traditional way, not as Beecham interprets it; but Furtwängler does not race it mercilessly in the silly manner of Koussevitzky. The Vienna Philharmonic applies their noted style to this music nicely. The "Surprise" Symphony is well handled too, with a generally straight reading by Furtwängler, not mannered. There are many other recordings of this work, some of equal merit, although the LP couplings differ in all except one: Capitol has the same Mozart and Haydn coupling (as this HMV disc) done by the Berlin Philharmonic (*CL-P-8038). Being a newer recording, and with the Furtwängler-Vienna combination, we would prefer the HMV record, but that is a close decision because of the lack of bass in the *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, noted above. Disregarding couplings, for a good *Eine kleine* you might investigate LP's by Mercury, Decca, and London; and for a good "Surprise" try Decca, Columbia, and Westminster, all of whom have formidable entries on these

items. The field is really crowded on these repertoire staples. S.

Hindemith: Der Schwanendreher. One side, and **Hindemith: Herodiade.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Herbert Haefner. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7460) \$5.95.

Der Schwanendreher is a concerto for viola and small orchestra based on old German folk tunes. There is a text appended to this work which vividly describes its program or poetic content, and also to a great extent its form. The program is concerned with a minstrel entering a happy gathering of people, expounding before them songs he has gathered abroad and improvising on them. Each of the three movements is based on a 16th century melody, the whole work taking its name from the title of the folk piece used in the last movement. Written in Germany in 1935, it was probably composed as a display piece for expert violist Hindemith to play. It is undoubtedly skillful writing, but we found it uniformly uninteresting and doubt if seven more hearings would alter our opinion. Guenther Breitenbach is the solo violist of the recording and he seems to do an adequate job.

Herodiade is subtitled "A Recitation for Chamber Orchestra, after a Poem by Mallarmé." It is a ballet score, commissioned by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in 1944 for Martha Graham and was first given in Washington at the Library of Congress. The music, described as being "after a poem by Mallarmé," is in effect just that; the poem, though nothing of it is spoken, is precisely quoted over the musical sections in the score. The musical dramatic-poetic line follows that of the poem very closely, and the choreography is a close action-parallel to both of these. The score is too long and too diverse to have been analyzed in the accompanying notes, so we are pretty much in the dark as to what it all means. Just listening to the music we found it more interesting than the *Schwanendreher*, and believe those who like such fare as the later Stravinsky works will find much of interest in this work. The piano plays an important part in the economical scoring. Several hearings of *Herodiade* could make a rather convincing case for us of this music. The Vienna Symphony under Herbert Haefner offers a careful account of the music and is well recorded. S.

Kalinnikov: Symphony No. 1 in G minor. State Radio Orchestra of the U. S. S. R. conducted by N. Rachlin. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5136) \$5.95.

Sevitzky and the Indianapolis Orchestra made a recording of this work some years ago, and it enjoyed a mild success. It stands a better chance of attaining some popularity now, with the greatly expanded record market and the blessings of LP. This symphony is as easy to listen to as anything by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, or Rimsky-Korsakov. Whether it is as great music as some of those gentlemen penned

is another matter. It is a thick, romantic canvas of no striking originality, built on conventional lines. Kalinnikov has a flair for orchestration similar to that of the long line of Russian composers from Tchaikovsky to Stravinsky. He is also not found lacking in melody. We would not proclaim this work any milestone in Russian music, but it is a pleasant work which has a strong appeal for most persons. Rachlin and the Russian State Radio Orchestra play the work with magnificent breadth and enthusiasm, bearing out its popularity in that country. The quality of reproduction of the recordings made in Russia is improving these days; this is the best yet from that standpoint. If this continues, they will be able to claim the invention of high fidelity within a year or two.

Kalinnikov died in 1901 at the early age of thirty-four. The last six years of his life were devoured by a flaming passion for composition and they gave birth to a whole series of works written feverishly with little consideration for the poor, frail body that was ravaged by sickness (he died of consumption). Aside from a number of piano pieces and songs, two symphonies, five symphonic pieces, a cantata, a vocal ballad, a string quartet, and the incidental music to a Tolstoi drama, were the total output of this passionate activity. There is no doubt that Kalinnikov would have been a more towering figure in music had he lived another quarter of a century. As it is, there is plenty of music from his pen to enrich the repertoire, and we should hear more of it. S.

Charles Münch Conducts French Music. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1700) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1700) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Rapsodie Espagnole* (Ravel); *La Valse* (Ravel); *La Princesse Jaune*, Op. 30—Overture (Saint-Saëns); *Beatrice and Benedict*—Overture (Berlioz); *Le Roi d'Ys*—Overture (Lalo).

Debussy: Nocturnes—Nuages, Fêtes, Sirènes. One side, and **Ravel: Rapsodie Espagnole.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-530) \$5.95.

Ansermet "Highlights." L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-503) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Debussy); *Circus Polka* (Stravinsky); *Alborado del Gracioso* (Ravel); *The Love for Three Oranges*—March (Prokofiev).

While each of these three discs is in itself a wonderful exposition of orchestral performance, this particular line-up does offer one unusually interesting study in comparisons. We refer, of course, to the two versions of Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole*. And versions they are, for each conductor has an entirely different idea of the music. Münch paints with bold, brilliant strokes, charged with energy

and restless motion. Ansermet uses his unique palette of pastels and does a highly atmospheric and fine-grained portrait. In our opinion the result is wholly in favor of Ansermet's interpretation, but we admit the effectiveness of the Münch method, appropriate or not for this music. Victor has packed a lot of music on the Münch disc, for *La Valse* occupies the same side as the *Rapsodie*. Münch's style is admirably suited to the restlessness of *La Valse*, resulting in a fine performance, full of dash and vigor. The Saint-Saëns, Berlioz, and Lalo overtures provide some unhackneyed fare in an interesting grouping. They are played with fine finish and lustrous tone by this distinguished orchestra. The reproduction is bold and biting and often thrilling.

Ansermet is a great favorite of ours, and these two discs provide a fine feast of his conductorial talents. All of the music is included in what have become specialties of his. In addition to a marvelous performance of the Ravel *Rapsodie*, the same disc contains the three Debussy *Nocturnes*. These were never played with more genuine delicacy. *Fêtes* does not require delicacy, but it can stand some finesse, which Ansermet applies nicely. It is truly a disc of the greatest knowledge, refinement, and conducting skill that one could wish for. The disc called "Highlights" has four numbers so arranged on each side that the short and snappy one serves as an encore to the more elaborate work which preceded it. They are all done with exceptional skill and beautifully recorded. Ansermet's growing fame will be well enhanced by these two discs. S.

Copland: Our Town. One side, and **Thomson: The Plow That Broke the Plains.** The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7527) \$3.85.

Copland: The Red Pony. One side, and **Thomson: Acadian Songs and Dances.** The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9616) \$5.85.

All of this music appears for the first time on LP, most of it for the first time on records. *The Plow that Broke the Plains* is a suite which has long appealed to us as fine American music. Stokowski recorded it some years ago, and we are pleased to see it turn up again in another recording. There was more atmosphere to Stokowski's rendition, but Scherman does a clean-cut and capable job. The reverse of this disc has Copland's music from the film score *Our Town* in a suite revised by the composer in 1944. It is based on music from several sections of the film: the main title music, scenes in a churchyard, and scenes of daily life in a small New England town. It is an intriguing study of the problems involved in composing ten minutes of slow, sustained music which is made up of the simplest, essentially uncontrasted, musical materials. Slightly shifting dissonances applied to rather plain sequences seem to have helped solve the problem. It is good movie music, and beyond that it is a pleasant and diverting

piece. Scherman plays it with fervor and conviction.

The large disc has a coupling of the same composers, and is also concerned with music from film scores which each wrote. Thomson's *Louisiana Story* music has resulted in two concert suites, one with original music from the score, and the other, *Acadian Songs and Dances*, with folk song settings of the most uncommon sophistication, skill, and charm. The folk songs concerned—"Cajun" tunes—were found by Thomson in the Lomax recorded collection and in Irene Whitfield's book "Louisiana French Songs." There are seven sections to the suite, depicting both mood and incident: Sadness, Papa's Tune, A Narrative, The Alligator and the 'Coon, Super-Sadness, Walking Song, and The Squeeze Box. This is magnificent music, worthy of a high place in the annals of American music. It is played superbly in this recording.

Copland's *Children's Suite* from *The Red Pony* was so called because so much of the music is meant to reflect a child's world. Steinbeck's tale is a series of vignettes concerning a ten year old boy called Jody and his life in a California ranch setting. This is not music for children; it is adult music of the usual order, nothing simplified about it in the least. It is marvelously pictorial and colorful—true program music. Thomas Scherman and his group, and Decca, have rendered a valuable service in issuing these exceptional records, both splendidly recorded. S.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 4 ("Inextinguishable"). Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Launy Grøndahl. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WHMV-1006) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1006) \$5.95.

Nielsen's *Symphony No. 3* "Espanvise" has been recorded by London (*L-LL-100). The *Fourth*, bearing another fanciful title, "Inextinguishable," is the second Nielsen work to come to LP's. Nielsen was Denmark's greatest composer (1865-1931), and by the time of his death had become a national figure in music whose influence had spread throughout Scandinavia. He differs from Sibelius in many ways, and would not, in our opinion, ever be considered as great a symphonist as the Finnish master. You will occasionally find moments in Nielsen's music which suggest Sibelius, and they do share a sharp clarity of utterance. But Nielsen's music is not as severely limited as Sibelius', nor is the substance as worthy. It is more conventionally romantic. After hearing the *Fourth* one is aware that Nielsen knew much about his art, had a great technique, and could express himself powerfully. But we are inclined to doubt that the basic material and motivating ideas were quite worthy of the skill used to express them. It is almost as though the music were superficial. This could easily be a wrong estimate which further acquaintance would change. There is certainly no denying the external effectiveness of this symphony.

Those with a dislike for angular, modern music,

thinly orchestrated, and melodically barren, need have no fear of Nielsen's music. They will find this easy going. And they will also be impressed with the convincing performance which the Danish State Radio Orchestra offers under the inspired leadership of Launy Grøndahl, Danish composer and conductor, who has led this admirable ensemble for over a quarter of a century. They cope with the furies and heroics of their countryman's Fourth symphony with vigor and sonority, and they are well reproduced. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 7 in C, Op. 105. Four sides, and **Rubbra: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat, Op. 63.** Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WHMV-1011) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1011) \$5.95.

Rubbra is a firmly established British composer, yet he is little known to the public at large. Publicity seems to be of no concern to him; he is happiest when working in seclusion in his country home. Rubbra is said to have an uncompromising artistic conscience which permits no concessions to public taste. He is regarded by many musicians as the outstanding symphonist of his generation. Rubbra indulges in no colorful or striking orchestration, is no seeker after novelty, and has a contrapuntal mastery and genius for organic development of the highest order. A gap of some six years, due mostly to Army service, separated his Fifth Symphony from its predecessor. The plan of the work, which was completed in 1948, is unusual—two Allegros (each with a long slow introduction) linked by a Scherzo. All three movements are based on figures or intervals heard at the outset of each, and a further unifying factor is the re-appearance, in the final bars of the symphony, of the theme with which the work opened.

Rubbra's *Fifth Symphony* is music which can be enjoyed by anyone who likes Sibelius. The coupling of the Sibelius *Seventh* with the Rubbra is a splendid choice for the works have at least one thing in common—they are serious music of two serious composers. We think Rubbra's music will find an ever increasing public because it is good music built on tradition and not on mathematics.

The Sibelius *Seventh Symphony* is in the catalogs by Beecham and the New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-4086) coupled with the *Siegfried Idyll*. Barbirolli can give Beecham a good run for his money in Sibelius, and does it with this recording. In fact, Barbirolli's readings of both the Rubbra and the Sibelius are an uncommonly fine bit of work. The Hallé orchestra sounds excellent and the reproduction is sonorous. S.

Berlioz: Harold in Italy, Op. 16. William Primrose (viola) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4542) \$5.45.

The genesis of Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* is a fas-

cinating story and one that also supplies an interesting sidelight on the composer's methods. Paganini came to Berlioz with the request that he write a concerto for his new viola. Answered Berlioz, "I don't write solos." Paganini insisted, however, and Berlioz cast around for ideas. Some material from an unpublished overture *Rob Roy* was deemed suitable (the French are very frugal); the work was begun and was to be called *Les Derniers Instants de Marie Stuart* for orchestra, chorus and solo viola! How it came to be *Harold in Italy* is not too clear. In all events, Paganini was not pleased. He frowned when he saw the score and said "There are too many rests—I must be playing all the time." Berlioz would not budge; but, despite their differences, the two remained good friends.

The "program" was formed, Berlioz tells us, from his own (not Childe Harold's) wanderings in the Abruzzi and the viola is introduced as a "melancholy dreamer, in the style of Byron's *Childe Harold*." A. Vienus points out that here "it helps to take Berlioz literally. He meant the style, not the content," of Byron's poem. If one insists on a verbal link with Byron, Jacques Barzun suggests it can be found in Canto IV, stanza lxi;

For I have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields
Than Art in galleries.

Sir Thomas Beecham and William Primrose combine to give a stunning performance of this altogether unique music. Sir Thomas' phrasing and meticulous attention to detail, plus his happy faculty for finding just the right tempo, make this a memorable recording. Primrose, undeniably one of the greatest virtuosi on this somewhat ungainly instrument, plays with genuine feeling and a complete disregard for his own personality—he submerges his individuality to the lasting success of the performance.

Columbia has supplied a fine technical job and the details of the colorful orchestration stand out beautifully.

All in all here is an LP that should be in every collection worthy of the name. The only previous recording, on VOX with Breitenbach (viola) and Moralt, cannot be considered in the same class. Primrose also outshines his previous recordings on Victor (78 rpm) with Koussevitzky. If you miss this one you have only yourself to blame. W.

Travis: Symphonic Allegro. One side, and Couperin —arr. Milhaud: *La Sultane*—Overture and Allegro. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-16) \$2.85.

Roy Elihu Travis was born in New York in 1922. He has studied abroad and at Juilliard here in this country. His *Symphonic Allegro* won the Seventh Annual Gershwin Memorial Award sponsored by Victory Lodge, B'nai B'rith. We rather think that

it was because of this publicity that Columbia decided to record it. Perhaps we were not in the right mood when we listened to it, but it seemed to us that it was a bit of modern music that was going in several directions at the same time without getting anywhere in particular—it is loud and has plenty of blatant brass. We rather liked Milhaud's modern arrangement of 18th century French music. The lovely melodies of Couperin have much to recommend them.

Wagner: Siegfried Idyll. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp minor** ("Farewell"). Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and members of L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Karl Munchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-525) \$5.95.

Wagner: Parsifal — Prelude and Transformation Scene. One side, and **Wagner: Rienzi**—Overture. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-451) \$5.95.

Is it that Wagner is losing in popularity with present day music lovers? It would seem so, if one considers that his recordings take up a little over a half page in Schwann's LP Catalog, while there is one and one-half pages devoted to his contemporary, Brahms. The recordings listed above are in no way outstanding and most of the music is already available on LP discs; but nevertheless they are welcome, if no other reason than that they help to swell the number of available Wagnerian recordings and give his devotees a wider range of choice. Why the Haydn "Farewell" was used as a coupling with the *Siegfried Idyll*, when so much music of Wagner is awaiting an opportunity to appear on LP discs, we would not know.

Strauss Soirée: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*VX-VL-3140) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Vergnügungszug*; *Stadt und Land*; *Eljen a Magyar*; *Klangfiguren* (Johann Strauss). *Mein Lebenslauf ist Lieb und Lust*; *Libelle*; *Ohne Sorgen* (Josef Strauss).

Strauss Favorites. Strauss Orchestra conducted by Franz Lanner. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-133) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Die Fledermaus*—Overture; *Blue Danube Waltz*; *Emperor Waltz*; *Voices of Spring*.

Music of Offenbach and Strauss. Strauss Orchestra conducted by Franz Lanner. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-139) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Orpheus in Hades*—Overture; *Tales of Hoffmann*—Barcarolle (Offenbach). *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (Johann Strauss).

These three LP discs contain a lot of fine dinner music always in the most refined style—most of it is well-known and thus may be appreciated by all listeners—played with nice spirit and splendidly reproduced.

Berlioz: (4) Overtures. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7048) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Le Corsaire*, Op. 21; *Le Carnaval Romain*, Op. 9; *Roi Lear*, Op. 4; *Beatrice et Benedict*.

It is nice to have these four Berlioz overtures on one LP disc, particularly so when they are as well played and recorded as we find here. This is a record that should have a reasonably wide appeal and a continued steady sale.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46. Four sides, and **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 2, Op. 55.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1700) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-1700) \$4.67.

While there are other LP recordings of these popular Grieg Suites available, it is nice to have both of them on one 10-inch disc. The Boston Pops does a fine job as usual and the reproduction is of the best.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Overture. One side, and **Weber: Oberon**—Overture. N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-19) \$2.85.

This little disc contains fine recordings of these popular overtures. Szell does a fine job and Columbia has supplied the best of reproduction.

Mendelssohn: Die schöne Melusine ("The Beautiful Melusine")—Overture, and **Mendelssohn: Meerestille und glückliche Fahrt**—"Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage"—Overture. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Moltkau. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25.** Orazio Frugoni (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7440) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25. Orazio Frugoni (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Die schöne Melusine** ("The Beautiful Melusine")—Overture, and **Mendelssohn: Meerestille und glückliche Fahrt**—"Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage"—Overture. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Moltkau. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7440) \$5.95.

In the March 1952 issue of TNR we reviewed the Mendelssohn *First Concerto* in a performance by Frank Pelleg (*CH-CHS-1127) and gave it high praise. We refer the reader to that article also for our opinion of the music—a high opinion. In case

you are not familiar with this concerto, we suggest that it belongs on the shelf with any of your other favorite concertos. Pelleg's performance of this lovely work surpasses the present set by Frugoni. Pelleg is more accurate in this music and he plays it with a more delicate approach. Pianists are divided on how to tackle this piece; half of them sail into it with great gusto and much superficial glitter. Sanroma, Frugoni and others are in this group. Others have more compassion for Mendelssohn's art, including Pelleg. Walter Goehr has an easier time keeping up with Pelleg than does Moralt with Frugoni. The reproduction of both sets is good; Concert Hall is more mellow—Vox is more glittery. We will take Pelleg on Concert Hall, and get a good coupling too: *Variations Serieuses*, Op. 54, also by Mendelssohn.

On the reverse of the present disc we find two lesser known Mendelssohn overtures. They may not rank with *Hebrides* and *Ruy Blas*, but they are pleasant diversions, and they are very well played by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Hans Moltkau. The Vienna Symphony displays not only an uncommon accuracy but a neat flair for this music. If you prefer this orchestral coupling to the *Variations Serieuses*, and don't mind a super-snappy-brilliant *First Concerto*, this disc can be recommended. Otherwise, get the Concert Hall concerto and wait for the overtures in some other collection. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466.

Four sides, and Mozart: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491. Artur Schnabel (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WHMV-1012) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1012) \$5.95.

One of the finest discs in the initial HMV release is this pairing of Mozart concertos played by Artur Schnabel. The late Schnabel was noted for his Beethoven and Mozart playing, and this disc will give more evidence why. For good, clear, well-ordered Mozart, this recording can well serve as a model. Schnabel has the proper masculine approach to Mozart, not rough, cold, nor mechanical, but with a strength and sharpness of line that are just right. His feeling for the music is well companioned by Süsskind and the Philharmonia Orchestra, and the balance between soloist and orchestra is well maintained in the reproduction which is also of excellent quality. The piano tone is extremely fine as recorded by our British brethren.

Concerto No. 20 is one of the best known and most melodious of the Mozart piano concerti. There are three other recordings of merit, as well as one or two of little merit. Kempff, Lili Kraus, and Serkin have recorded this work, but all have less desirable couplings—or no couplings; Serkin's takes both sides of a twelve inch disc!

Concerto No. 24 has been recorded by Lili Kraus coupled with *Sonatina*, K. 545, and by Badura-

Skoda coupled with *Concerto No. 27* (*WEST-WL-5097), this being a worthwhile coupling. Badura-Skoda is a pianist who, through young, is of exceptional ability. If the coupling of No. 24 and No. 27 is preferable you will find Badura-Skoda's disc a good choice; if the Schnabel couplings are satisfactory, we would suggest his for about as fine a Mozart piano concerto disc as you are likely to find. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in G, K. 216. One side, and Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218.

Szymon Goldberg (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9609) \$5.85.

Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218. One side, and Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19.

Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4533) \$5.45.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19. One side, and Miaskovsky: Concerto in D minor, Op. 44.

David Oistrakh (violin) with symphony orchestra conducted by A. Gauk. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-539) \$5.95.

There are now three recorded versions on LP of Mozart's *Concerto No. 3* and five of the *Concerto No. 4*; as we are rather familiar with all of these recordings we do not hesitate to make the following recommendations: the best recording of the *Third* is the Columbia one (*C-ML-4326) by Isaac Stern and the best of the *Fourth* is on RCA Victor (*V-LM-1051) by Heifetz; however, if we wished to have both of these lovely concertos, we would purchase the Decca disc listed above which contains both of them played by Szymon Goldberg. By selecting the Decca disc we would effect a saving and would have just what we wanted without taking other selections in which we were not particularly interested, and further, Goldberg is an exceptionally fine artist and the recordings he made for Decca are quite satisfactory from the standpoint of reproduction. . . . The Prokofiev *Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19* is an important item that has been missing from the LP catalogs and now we have two versions of it. In our opinion, the Szigeti version listed above is rather to be desired than the Oistrakh recording which is also listed this month. . . . Of some interest is the first and only recording on LP of Miaskovsky's *Concerto in D minor, Op. 44*—a work that the composer said was "technically interesting for a virtuoso" and "could be played with enjoyment" and "should be easy for the audience." This work of one of the most important Soviet composers dates from 1938 and is said to have the blessing of the Soviet authorities and to be tremendously popular in the USSR where it appears continuously on programs in the concert halls and over the radio. The present soloist, David Oistrakh, has performed it innumerable times and is noted for his playing

of this composition; thus we should have this concerto at its best in the present recorded version. The Oistrakh recordings were probably made in the USSR, and, if they were, the Russian technicians are improving greatly for the reproduction is certainly highly satisfactory. R.

Mozart: Concerto No. 16 in D, K. 451. Jeannette Haien (piano) with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. 1-10" disc (*WCFM-LP-101) \$4.75.

Mozart: Concerto No. 19 in F, K. 459. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488.** Lili Kraus (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-6890) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 25 in C, K. 503. Carl Seemann (piano) with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: (10) Variations on "Unser dumme Pöbel meint," K. 455.** Carl Seemann (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9568) \$5.85.

All of these Mozart concerti are already available on LP records. The interest in these new recordings is largely limited to the artists who perform them. A new recording by the celebrated pianist, Lili Kraus, is always an occasion for rejoicing, and this one is no exception to the rule. . . . It is also pleasing to have such a nice recording by the American pianist, Jeannette Haien. Miss Haien is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory. She also studied with Leonard Shure, Artur Schnabel and Abram Chasins. She has appeared in numerous concerts and with several of our leading symphony orchestras. In addition to being a pianist of note, Miss Haien is both a writer of short stories and a poet of considerable stature. . . . The German pianist, Carl Seemann, will probably be unknown to most of our readers although he has had considerable success on the concert platform in Europe, where he has also appeared with many important symphony orchestras. Herr Seemann was born in Bremen in 1910 and received his early musical education at the *Gymnasium* of that city. Later he studied piano with C. A. Martienssen and organ with Günther Ramin at the Institute of Church Music in Leipzig.

Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat, K. 207. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 2 in D, K. 211.** Aida Stucki (violin) with the Ton-Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-549) \$5.95

Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 6 in E-flat, K. 268.** Reinhold Barchet (violin) with the Pro-Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Wilhelm Seegelken and Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7240) \$5.95.

Of the four Mozart violin concerti on these two

discs only No. 4 in D, K. 218 is already available in an LP version. As a matter of fact, of the four it is the only one that is at all well-known to present-day music lovers. The others are seldom heard in our concert halls. Nos. 1 and 2 are the first of a group of five that Mozart wrote in 1775 when he was Concert Master at Salzburg and it would seem that it was not until he reached the third in the series that the true genius of the composer began to show. In the first two, the orchestra introduces the solo instrument and from then on the violinist is pretty much on his own without much support. Thus these works would not appeal generally to music lovers of today, and they have disappeared from the repertory.

The *Concerto No. 6 in E-flat, K. 268* is seldom heard because of an entirely different reason. This work dates from 1780 or 1781, and it is pretty well established that Mozart never finished it. It was possibly completed by a young musician by the name of Eck; Herr Eck was not Mozart, nor is this concerto in a class with Mozart's best works in this form.

We would say briefly that these two LP discs will be of especial interest to discerning students of Mozart's music rather than the general music-loving public. R.

Beethoven: Concerto in D Major, Op. 61. Alfredo Campoli (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-560) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto in D Major, Op. 61. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-562) \$5.95.

London fears no competition, not even itself. With LP recordings of the Beethoven Concerto already on the market by Francescatti, Heifetz, Kulenkampf and Szigeti, London puts up two more entries at the same time. Does it seem funny? Well, it is. A Ricci and a Campoli do not equal a Heifetz, and if they did it would cost you \$11.90 for the privilege of finding out. All of this is not to say that neither Ricci nor Campoli play a good Beethoven concerto; they both do a good job. But even between the two of them, London should not have too hard a time figuring out which one to issue. Campoli is clearly the finer artist and better performer, if for no other reason than his accurate pitch. His over-all playing is much smoother and more refined and mature than Ricci's. Campoli's tone is not as large and bold as Ricci's, nor has London recorded the Campoli at as high a volume level as the Ricci. The London Philharmonic under Boult proves an excellent companion for Ricci, offering a muscular accompaniment with plenty of drive. Krips and the London Symphony provide an accompaniment of distinctly Viennese flavor and grace which is most befitting the refined style of soloist Campoli. These are inter-

esting recordings, and maybe London was so enchanted with the distinct differences they decided to throw the issue before the eager public. Anyhow, here are both of them for your own decision. But don't forget that magnificent performance of Francescatti's with Ormandy and the Philadelphians. It is the best Beethoven Concerto to come our way in a long time. The others have their individual merits, and no one will deny the brilliance of the older Heifetz-Toscanini set now re-issued on LP. It is quite a hassle at this point. After overcoming the intrigue of these two simultaneous new entries, we have solved the problem by preferring Francescatti. We acknowledge the many virtues of Heifetz and Szigeti. We enjoyed Campoli and Ricci. And in that order we would buy any one of them. S.

Paganini: Concerto No. 2 in B minor, Op. 7. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. Four sides, and **Vieuxtemps: Concerto No. 4 in D minor, Op. 31.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WHMY-1015) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMY-1015) \$5.95.

Both of these concertos enter the LP lists for the first time. Paganini's *Concerto No. 2* is well known at least in part, for the final Rondo à la clochette is the "La Campanella" of previously recorded fame. Preceding this section is an Adagio inspired by a tragedy Paganini saw at the theatre. The first movement is a hair-raiser nearly as much as the final rondo. The concerto as a whole is of the spectacular variety and contributed, in its day, to the term demoniac, which was associated with Paganini's art. Paganini himself was so satisfied with the work and its ability to show off his technique that he chose it with which to make his debut outside his native country. It undoubtedly exhibited him to the best advantage, as no other concerto could have done. Menuhin performs this incredibly difficult music with enormous vitality. There is no small-tone mincing around with the complexities of the music; he is vigorous and surprisingly broad in tone for such fast moving music. His statement of the Campanella is masterly and the best we can recall. For those who like the utmost in pyrotechnics for the violin, this is the concerto to end all attempts at technical tricks.

Vieuxtemps was no amateur at difficult violin writing either, but his music also displayed a more lyric gift for melody and long songful lines. The *Concerto No. 4* is prevailingly serious and sombre all through the first movement, but springs to life in the last movement which exploits the violin rather thoroughly. Menuhin plays this concerto with breadth and nobility, and with beautiful tone. The accompaniments for both concertos, by the Philharmonia Orchestra under two fine conductors, are splendid and the reproduction is good. We would recommend this disc highly to all fanciers of violin

concerto music, the Paganini being particularly impressive. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 1, No. "O". One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 1, No. 1.** The Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-1) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 1, No. 2. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 1, No. 3.** The Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-2) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in G, Op. 1, No. 4. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in C, Op. 1, No. 6.** The Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-3) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in E, Op. 17, No. 1. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in C minor, Op. 17, No. 4.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-13) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in F, Op. 17, No. 2. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 17, No. 3.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-14) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in G, Op. 17, No. 5. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 17, No. 6.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-15) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in D minor, Op. 42. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in G, Op. 77, No. 1.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-37) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in F, Op. 77, No. 2. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 103.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-38) \$5.95.

The Haydn Society announced some time ago that it would issue a series of recordings consisting of all of the Haydn String Quartets recorded by the Schneider Quartet. So far the recordings in this series listed above have been released and they have received high praise from both the music loving public and critics. We found them entirely satisfactory both from the point of performance and the quality of the reproduction.

We had hoped that the Haydn Society would have issued a prospectus of this very ambitious undertaking giving the number of quartets it hoped to record and some idea of the order and frequency of their release, but to date no such information is available. No one seems to know just how many string quartets Haydn wrote. It is, however, pretty well established that he wrote at least seventy-six and as only sixteen have been made available by the Haydn Society, it would seem that it will be a matter of years before this series is completed.

Beethoven: Trio in B-flat, Op. 97 ("Archduke").

Paul Badura-Skoda (piano); Jean Fournier (violin); Antonio Janigro (violin). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5131) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 5 in A, Op. 18, No. 5.

One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95 ("Serious").** Barylli Quartet: Walter Barylli, Otto Strasser (violins); Rudolph Streng (viola); Richard Krottschak (violin). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5140) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 13 in B-flat, Op. 130.

Barylli Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5129) \$5.95.

As satisfactory renditions of all of these Beethoven chamber works have appeared on LP before, we feel that it is only necessary to list them and state that they have been performed by able artists and that the Westminster reproduction is of high calibre throughout. As the fourth and fifth recorded versions of many chamber works are now being released, it is impossible for us to make comparisons. For example, there is a total of twelve recordings of the four items listed above; to make comparisons one should listen to them more than once. When you consider that it would take six hours just to listen to these twelve recordings once through without a pause, it becomes pretty evident that the honest reviewer had better admit right off of the bat that he did not make any comparisons. The best that we can do under the circumstances is to keep our readers advised of the various new versions as they are released and let them make their own decisions as to which best suits their individual tastes. If by any chance a recording appears that is definitely not up to present day standards, we will, of course, warn our readers of that fact.

Schubert: Trio in E-flat, Op. 100.

Paul Badura-Skoda (piano); Jean Fournier (violin); Antonio Janigro (violin). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5121) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 13 in A minor, Op. 29.

Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5115) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 8 in B-flat, Op. 168.

One side, and **Schubert: Quartet in D, Op. Posth.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5110) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quintet in C, Op. 163.

Pascal Quartet with Andre Navarra (violin). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7030) \$5.95.

Of this batch of Schubert chamber music all of it is already available on LP discs except the two quartets to be found on the Westminster record (*WEST-WL-5110). Both of these little works were composed before Schubert was eighteen years of age and were written to be played at home by the composer's father, two brothers and himself. Neither is of great importance, but they will fit in

very nicely in the library of anyone who is making a collection of Schubert chamber music recordings. As they are well played and splendidly recorded this new LP disc should prove a very acceptable addition to the repertory of recorded music.

Poulenc: Sextet for Piano and Wind Instruments.

Charles Rosen (piano); Harry Shulman (oboe); David Weber (clarinet); Leonard Sharrow (bassoon); Harold Bennett (flute); Fred Klein (horn). One side, and **Poulenc: Trio for Piano, Oboe and Bassoon.** Charles Rosen (piano); Harry Shulman (oboe); Leonard Sharrow (bassoon) and **Poulenc: Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon.** David Weber (clarinet); Leonard Sharrow (bassoon). 1-12" disc (*REB-LP-7) \$5.95.

Poulenc: Trio for Trumpet, Trombone and French Horn.

Harry Glanz (trumpet); Gordon Pulis (trombone); Arthur Berv (horn). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Septet for String Quartet, Bass, Trumpet and Piano.** Stradivari String Quartet with Harry Glanz (trumpet); Brooks Smith (piano); Philip Sklar (bass). 1-12" disc (*STRADIVARI STR-605) \$5.95.

We are indeed sorry that we do not have space enough to cover these two unusual discs in some detail. However, those of our readers who are interested in chamber music of this character will probably only need to know that it is available and that it has been nicely recorded by able artists. With this knowledge they will doubtless lose no time in investigating this pair of records.

CHORAL

**Bach: Missa Brevis No. 1 in F.**

One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Sanctus No. 1 in C.** (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Swabian Choral Singers and the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-44) \$5.95.

Bach: Missa Brevis No. 2 in A.

One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Sanctus No. 2 in D.** (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Swabian Choral Singers and the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-45) \$5.95.

These two discs offer some interesting sidelights on the musical practices of the early 18th century and on Bach himself. The two *Missa brevis* recorded here are of mysterious origin. It is not clear for whom they were written, but since Bach was in fairly close contact with Count Franz Anton von Sporck, a Catholic nobleman, it is assumed that they were written for him. Now, since the good Count was in all probability unfamiliar with Bach's Protestant church music, the master could delve into his cantatas and select appropriate portions and rework them to the text of the mass. Thus, little if anything was composed originally for these pieces.

Space does not permit listing the cantatas from which the material was drawn but Dr. Grischkat's informative notes printed on the jacket supply all the data. Despite the borrowing, however, the reworking is so fine that the pieces must be considered, as Dr. Grischkat points out, "among the most important compositions within Bach's creative output." They are, indeed, magnificent music.

Also included on each record is a *Sanctus*. Bach wrote four pieces in this form, of which only the second, *Sanctus II, D Major*, in unquestionably by Bach. The *Sanctus I, C Major* is generally agreed to be by Bach, although it is not signed. Their purpose and time of composition is in doubt—but their musical value, particularly that of the second, is not. They are powerful and inspired works.

The indefatigable Dr. Grischkat and his Swabian Choral Singers along with the hard working Tonstudio Orchestra give excellent performances. The soloists are above average and special mention must be made of the superb horn playing on both discs.

The recording is as fine as can be heard on LP's today and both discs are highly recommended. W.

Monteverdi: Beatus Vir. One side, and **Monteverdi: Laudate Dominum** and **Monteverdi: Ut Quaeant.** (Sung in Latin). Choral Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra of the Scuola Veneziana. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-536) \$5.95.

Vivaldi: Dixit. (Sung in Latin). Soloists with the Choral Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra of the Scuola Veneziana. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-537) \$5.95.

Two Italian masters, both numbered among music's "greats" are featured on two excellent LP discs released by Period. There has been, for some time, a growing interest in the music of both Monteverdi and Vivaldi. Since both men were prolific composers, and since there seems to be an unending demand for music not heretofore recorded, it is likely that there will be more and more attention paid to the lesser known works of such writers.

Monteverdi is represented by three works, two of which, *Beatus Vir* and *Laudate Dominum* are settings of Psalms, the former the 111th and the latter the 116th. Of the two, *Beatus Vir* is the more elaborate. It calls for six voices and the instrumental scoring includes violins, violas and *viola da braccio* besides the usual continuo. *Laudate Dominum* is less involved but equally beautiful. The third work, *Ut Quaeant* is scored for two sopranos, two violins and continuo. It is a hymn to St. John at communal confession.

The Vivaldi work, much more *baroque* in nature (as might be expected) is a grandiose setting of the 110th Psalm, the first words of which have led settings of it to be known as "Dixit" *Dixit Dominus Domino meo* (The Lord said unto my Lord). This piece calls for five soloists, two sopranos, an alto, a tenor and a bass. In addition a chorus and small

chamber orchestra are required. It is a fascinating composition, full of color and happy textual and musical unions.

Both records employ the same soloists and in each instance the artists are under the direction of Angelo Ephrikian. The soloists, incidentally, are all excellent, having a good sense of style and the musical intelligence to put it into practice. Fine recording is also provided. W.

Music of the Sixteenth Century. (Sung in Italian, French, English and Latin). Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1598) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-136) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Lasciatemi morire* (Monteverdi); *Reveye venir du Printans* (le Jeune); *Agnus Dei* (Morley); *Christ rising again* (Byrd); *Olà! O che bon eccho!* (Lassus); *Lift up your heads* (Leising); *O vos omnes* (Victoria).

A Program of Choral Excerpts. (Sung in English, Latin and German). Hamline Singers with the Hamline University (St. Paul) a Cappella Choir directed by Robert Holliday. 1-10" disc (NEW RECORDS NRLP-305) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Sixty-seventh Psalm* (Ives); *Lamentabatur Jacob* (Morales); *Jesu, as Thou art our Savior* (Britten); *Christ to Thee be glory* (Schütz); *Exultate Deo* (Scarlatti); *Schifferliedchen* and *Zur Erntezeit* (Kienek); *Fragment of Sappho* (Brunswick).

Those interested in choral music will certainly find these two recordings of prime importance. The Victor recording is far superior in reproduction, and, of course, the Hamline Singers, made up of students from Hamline University, are no match for Robert Shaw's professional group; but these amateurs have recorded a number of very interesting selections and their fine training is evidenced by the manner in which they render them.

Bach: Cantata No. 201 ("Der Streit zwischen Phoebus und Pan"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Swabian Choral Singers and the Stuttgart Tonstudio Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-42) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 205 ("Der zufriedengestellte Aeolus"). (Sung in German). Soloists with the Swabian Choral Singers and the Stuttgart Tonstudio Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-43) \$5.95.

These two first recordings of secular cantatas by Bach serve as an additional proof, if such were needed, of the many facets of the Leipzig cantor's genius. Much stress has been placed on his seriousness of purpose, the grandeur and majesty of his conception—that is all true, but there was an "unbuttoned" Bach (as there is an unbuttoned Beethoven) and these *Cantatas* show one the Bach with a sense of humor—Bach with a light touch.

Der Streit zwischen Phoebus und Pan is almost a one act opera (it has, in fact, been presented as such) and bears the sub-title *dramma per musica*. The story is an amusing one with a moral and concerns a contest between Phoebus and Pan as to whose art is the most effective. The judge winds up by deciding in favor of both and gets, for his pains, a set of asses' ears. There is a lesson here for critics. The other cantata is *Der Zufriedengestellte Aeolus* and it may be considered the most brilliant of Bach's secular compositions. The orchestration is particularly colorful with its use of high trumpets and horns. The fooling and laughter that abound in the work are refreshing and, at the same time, scholarly.

Both records were made in Stuttgart with the indefatigable Swabian Choral Society and the Ton Studio Orchestra under Hans Grischkat. The soloists are all capable vocally and have the required sense of style, without which the music would sound empty and meaningless. Especially fine is Käthe Nentwig as Momus in *Phoebus and Pan* and Pallas in *Aeolus Appealed*. Werner Hohmann and Franz Kelch also appear in both recordings and sing excellently.

The recording is uniformly good and texts and translations have been supplied.

W.



OPERA

Mozart: *Così fan tutte*, K. 588 (complete). (Sung in Italian). Erna Hassler, Käthe Nentwig (sopranos); Hetty Plümacher (contralto); Albert Weikenmeier (tenor); Karl Hoppe (baritone); Franz Kelch (basso); with the Stuttgart Tonstudio Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Joseph Dünnwald. 3-12" discs in album (*PE-SPLP-555) \$18.50.

So much has been written concerning the libretto and music of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* that any further remarks from this corner would not only be absurd, they would be impertinent. Certainly the opera does not enjoy the popularity of *Don Giovanni* or *Le Nozze di Figaro* or even *Die Zauberflöte* and the reasons are as varied and numerous as there are writers. Luckily, one is able to judge for himself via records.

Period has been the first to give us a complete LP version of this beautiful and entrancing music. Unfortunately, the performance somehow doesn't come off. There is a wooden quality about the presentation that is most unbecoming. As the two sisters, Erna Hassler and Hetty Plumacher sing in always pleasing fashion except that they never get inside the characters. Miss Hassler, as Dorabella sings the music of *Smania implacabile* far too calmly while Hetty Plumacher remains very much herself while singing the exciting *Come scoglio immoto resta*. The men fare a little better, Karl Hoppe as Guglielmo being perhaps, the most acceptable vocally, for Albert Weikenmeier has trouble, on occasion, with his upper notes. Franz Kelch is a fair Don Alfonso and Käthe

Nentwig a so-so Despina.

Some of the performance's shortcomings must be laid at the feet of Conductor Dünnwald whose direction is pedestrian and too relaxed. A hearing of the old Glyndebourne performance, now unfortunately out-of-print, would demonstrate far better than words can the deficiencies of this present recording. The lack-lustre manner in which soloists and orchestra run through the music deprives the score of almost all its sparkle and vivacity. This is a fatal fault for Mozart here demanded a light touch—the music is brittle, fragile and to treat it in summary fashion makes it misfire completely.

A complete libretto, with an altogether too free translation has been supplied. The recording is a good job. The only other LP recording of some of this music is the one issued by Victor as *Highlights from Così fan tutte* (TNR May '51). It is a superb affair—hear it along with this one before deciding.

W.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godunov (complete). (Sung in Russian). Kruglikova (soprano); Slatogorova (mezzo-soprano); Verbitskaya (contralto); Chăn-ayev, Nyelepp (tenors); Bogdanov (baritone); Michailov, Yakuschenko (bassos); with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by N. S. Golovanov. 3-12" discs in album (*PE-SPLP-554) \$18.50.

Moussorgsky began work on his opera *Boris Godunov* in October 1868 and finished it in about May of the following year—the scoring was done during the summer and fall of that year. The score most of us know, however, is an arrangement, not of this first work but a later one, by Rimsky-Korsakov. Space will not permit a description of how all this came about; it must suffice to point out that the present recording is the Rimsky-Korsakov arrangement of Moussorgsky's second score, with three exceptions: (1) the scene between Marina and the Jesuit Rango is omitted; (2) the scene before the Cathedral of St. Basil is restored from Moussorgsky's first version; and (3) the last two scenes appear in the order Moussorgsky originally planned—first the Death of Boris, then the Revolutionary Scene in the Forest of Kromy.

This recording, made in the USSR, is to all intents authoritative but none of the singers is what could be called first-rate. We have, to be sure, been spoiled by Chaliapine's majestic portrayal and, more recently, Boris Christoff's sonorous and dignified interpretation via records, so poor Piragoff has some stiff competition. Vocally he is no match for either of the two singers mentioned. His upper voice tightens, and one sorely misses the dignity that must have been Boris'. The *Clock Scene*, one of the most tremendous scenes in all opera, falls flat because of overfast tempi and remains unconvincing. The *Monologue* and *Death Scene* fare a little better but are in no way up to what one knows can be done. Chanayev is a somewhat nasal Prince Shouisky while

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ♪ indicates 45 rpm.

Yakuschenko portrays a somewhat coarse Varlaam that has credibility. Marina, in the person of Maksekova, is well sung but, as the false Dimitri, Nyelepp displays a mediocre voice. Others in the long cast are in no way exceptional.

It is not possible to judge the chorus and orchestra with any degree of accuracy because of the poor quality of the recorded sound. In addition the solo voices are given preëminence to such an extent that the orchestra sounds as if it were playing behind an iron curtain.

It is a pity to have to report that the performance and recording leave so much to be desired but such is the plain truth. W.

VOCAL

Schumann: Dichterliebe, Op. 48. (Sung in German). Pierre Bernac (baritone) and Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2210) \$4.

A Schumann-Wolf Recital. (Sung in German). Gerard Souzay (baritone) and Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-535) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Dichterliebe, Op. 48 (Schumann). *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier; Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst; Wer tat deinem Füßlein weh?; In der Frühe* (Wolf).

Schumann's *Dichterliebe* has not fared too well on LP and these two new releases both leave something to be desired. It could be—in fact most likely is—that the songs make excessive demands, not vocally, but artistically. They require a degree of understanding for their successful projection that is beyond most of the singers who have attempted them. In the pre-LP days there was a beautiful but over-refined version by Panzera and an unapproachable performance by the incomparable Hüschi.

Gérard Souzay is the more successful in his handling of these songs. His voice is good, if not great, and his command of German is above average. Furthermore, Souzay can control his voice and color it in a very acceptable manner and these accomplishments help him over many difficult spots.

Bernac, on the other hand, has virtually no voice. For some unknown reason he elects to sing a version that is pitched higher than Souzay's and the resultant strain it places on his voice causes a wobble that is unattractive. In addition he sings the cycle in a very effeminate manner that becomes, at times, grotesque.

Both singers suffer from the lack of a sense of humor in their approach. Not that there is any humor in the songs—far from it, and that is just the trouble. The whole cycle is sung by both men in deadly serious fashion and, to be truthful, both versions are dull. The necessary lightness, a relieving indication on the singer's part that after all he realizes the extravagance of the lyrics, is missing.

In the recording department Souzay has the best of it although his very able accompanist, who should

be a co-soloist, is relegated to the background. M. Casadesus fares better in the matter of microphone placement and his well considered performance outshines Bernac's mannered singing. Neither set gives the German text and only Columbia supplies an English version of the words. W.

The Gay Nineties. Helen Traubel (soprano) with the Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7005) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7005) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: Take Me Out to the Ball Game; A Bird in a Gilded Cage; Waiting for the Robert E. Lee; The Curse of an Aching Heart; After the Ball; Mother Was a Lady; My Pony Boy; Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home.

The person who gave this record its title, "The Gay Nineties," certainly never read Joe Laurie, Jr.'s, notes that appear on the back of the record's jacket. Mr. Laurie is careful to date each song in this collection and thus it turns out that only two of the eight selections (*After the Ball* and *Mother Was a Lady*) were written before 1900. We would have put *A Bird in a Gilded Cage* in the "Nineties," but Mr. Laurie says that it was written by Lamb and Von Tilzer after the turn of the century. There is no question about the others; anyone with any knowledge of popular music would know that they appeared on the scene long after the "Gay Nineties."

We would not make a point of this except that RCA Victor seems to think that Miss Traubel of the Metropolitan Opera is doing something of real cultural value in preserving for all times a group of ditties from an era that marked a milestone in the development of popular music on our country. As matter of fact, for the most part Miss Traubel is singing a number of songs, and not particularly good ones, that many of us remember as children—songs that had nothing whatever to do with the "Gay Nineties." It may be a novelty to have the great Wagnerian soprano sing *My Pony Boy* but we doubt greatly its cultural value.

PIANO

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 2-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9004) \$2.83. Coupled with **Schumann: Fantasia in C, Op. 17.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9003) \$5.72.

Schumann: Fantasia in C, Op. 17. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9003) \$3.99. Coupled with **Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9003) \$5.72.

While there are other versions of these popular Schumann pieces already available on LP, Brailowsky probably has a sufficient following here in America to make the present disc commercially successful. It is a great joy to hear this superb artist

play these familiar selections—he is blessed with the best of piano reproduction.

Favorite Keyboard Classics. Victor Schiöler (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10099) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Rondo Capriccioso in E, Op. 14 (Mendelssohn); A Midsummer Night's Dream—Scherzo (Mendelssohn-Schiöler); To Spring, Op. 43, No. 6 (Grieg); Liebestraum No. 3 (Liszt); Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2 (Rachmaninoff); Nocturne for the Left Hand, Op. 9, No. 2 (Scriabin); Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23 (Chopin).

Romantic Piano Favorites. Constance Keene (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10113) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Dance of the Gnomes; Forest Murmurs (Liszt). Prelude in E-flat, Op. 23, No. 6; Prelude in E-flat minor, Op. 23, No. 9; Prelude in D, Op. 23, No. 4 (Rachmaninoff). Prelude in G, Op. 28, No. 3; Prelude in F-sharp minor, Op. 28, No. 8; Prelude in B-flat minor, Op. 28, No. 16 (Chopin). The Maiden's Wish (Chopin-Liszt). Clair de lune; La fille aux cheveux de lin; Golliwog's Cake-Walk (Debussy); Tango in D, Op. 165, No. 2; Triana (Albeniz-Godowsky).

Lovers of fine piano recordings will doubtless be quite enthusiastic about these LP discs—each contains a recital of favorite piano selections by an artist of renown. The Danish keyboard virtuoso, Victor Schiöler, was a student of Ignaz Friedman and Artur Schnabel and before World War II achieved great success on the concert platform on the Continent and England. In 1948 Schiöler made his American debut at New York's Town Hall and following that very successful recital he gave a concert to a large and enthusiastic audience at Carnegie Hall in 1949. Both concerts were greeted by the critics with unusual praise. . . . The American pianist, Constance Keene, was born in New York City and is a student of Abram Chasins. Miss Keene's first professional concert was given at Town Hall in 1943 and was made possible by her winning the Naumburg Award. Since then she has toured in the United States, Canada and South America with great success and has appeared with the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic.

Twentieth Century Music for Two Pianos. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 4-7" discs in box (6V-WDM-1705) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1705) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: La Valse (Ravel); (3) Mikrokosmos (Bartók); Billy the Kid—Excerpts (Copland); Sonata for Two Pianos (Stravinsky); Sonata, 1918 (Poulenc); The Poisoned Fountain (Bax).

Whittemore and Lowe have selected a choice group of works for this splendid LP disc. Those interested in music for two pianos will be surely pleased with this new record by an outstanding

team in this field. RCA Victor has supplied the best of piano reproduction.

Schumann: Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26. One side, and Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann, Op. 9. Jacqueline Blanchard (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-416) \$5.95.

Schumann: Kreisleriana, Op. 16. One and one-half sides, and Schumann: Romance, Op. 28, No. 2 and Schumann: Toccata in C, Op. 7. Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5142) \$5.95.

Schumann Piano Music. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-119) \$3.

CONTENTS: Carnaval, Op. 9—Préambule, Valse noble, Chiarina, Chopin, Estrella; Arabesque, Op. 18; Träumerei; Dedication.

The three LP discs listed above contain a wealth of Schumann keyboard music. Of particular interest to us was the first LP version of that composer's *Faschingsschwank aus Wien* played with fine spirit by the Swiss pianist, Jacqueline Blanchard. We wish that we could recommend it without reservation, but we cannot because the piano reproduction is not all that we could wish for—it has a rather metallic ring that is not always pleasant. . . . Joerg Demus' version of *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16 is in competition with Ray Lev's fine recording of this work for Concert Hall. As far as we are concerned it is pretty much a toss-up. We would, however, probably choose Miss Lev's recording but that would probably be because she is one of our personal favorites. . . . On the M-G-M disc, Menahem Pressler plays a group of tuneful Schumann pieces in a very pleasing manner.

VIOLONCELLO



Encores by Gaspar Cassado and Paul Schoeffler. Gaspar Casado (violoncello) and Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone). 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-45) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: Andalusian Dance (Granados); The Swan (Saint-Saëns); *Ave Maria (Bach-Gounod); Valse Sentimentale (Tchaikovsky); Melody (Rubinstein); Improvisations on "The Blue Danube" (Strauss-Cassado); Nocturne in E-flat, Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin); *Morgen (R. Strauss); Albumblatt (Wagner); Moment Musical (Schubert); Suite No. 3 in D—Air (Bach); Spinning Song (Mendelssohn); *Elegie (Massenet); Träumerei (Schumann); Gavotte (Popper).

*Selections marked with asterisk are sung by Paul Schoeffler.

Here is one of those collections that may be to many persons' liking but leaves this reviewer cold. Gaspar Cassado, an essentially fine 'cellist delivers himself of a variety of "encores" including the inevitable *Le Cygne* and Rubenstein's *Melodie*. A curiosity is *Improvisations on "The Blue Danube"*

wherein, one is informed, "Spanish rhythms permeate the Austrian three-quarter time." It would be better if they didn't for the result is neither fish, flesh nor fowl. There are numerous other items, several of which employ the services of Paul Schoeffler including the Bach-Gounod *Ave Maria* and Richard Strauss' lovely *Morgen*. Cassado's round, full tone is marred, occasionally, on this disc by faulty intonation.

The recording is fair but not, as the jacket proclaims "the ultimate in high-fidelity recordings."

VIOLIN



Encores by Francescatti. Zino Francescatti (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4534) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Grave* (Bach-Kreisler); *Allegretto*; *Praeludium and Allegro*; *Minuet*; *Londonderry Air* (Kreisler); *Presto in B-flat* (Poulenc-Heifetz); *Ao pé da Foqueira* (Valle-Heifetz); *Meditation* (Massenet); *O Canto do Cysne Negro* (Villa-Lobos); *Marche Joyeuse* (Chabrier-Dushkin); *Chaconne in G minor* (Vitali).

Concert Souvenirs. Louis Kaufman (violin) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8165) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Humoresque* (Dvořák); *Andante Cantabile* (Tchaikovsky); *Souvenir* (Drda); *Londonderry Air*; *Meditation* (Massenet); *Träumerei* (Schumann); *Hymn to the Sun* (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Ave Maria* (Schubert).

Twentieth Century Violin Music. Ruth Posselt (violin) accompanied by Allan Sly (piano). 1-12" disc (*ACADEMY ALP-304) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (5) *Melodies*, Op. 35 (Prokofiev); *Tango*, Op. 6, No. 3 (Arbos); *Sonata in E* (Hindemith); *Premiere Sonate Fantaisie* (Villa-Lobos).

Francescatti and Kaufman are well known to record collectors and it is only necessary to list the selections on their discs—this we have done . . . The American violinist, Ruth Posselt, is not so well known to those interested in recorded music although she has been before the public since she was six years of age. At the age of nine she appeared at Carnegie Hall in New York and at Symphony Hall in Boston. She has toured Europe on several occasions and has appeared with many of the most important symphony orchestras here in the United States—she has appeared with the Boston Symphony on forty occasions. She is unquestionably an artist of high calibre—the present recordings will testify to that fact. Her selections are interesting and should appeal to all discerning music lovers, especially those interested in the music of the present era. Academy has supplied satisfactory reproduction.

DICTION



A Meeting of the James Joyce Society. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLKWAYS FP-93/4) \$11.90.

Unusual LP's are no rarity these days and, while this particular set of discs will be caviar to the general, we have here a totally different type of release.

James Joyce, who became a legend in his own lifetime, has been called many things (from "master of obscenity" to "the genius of Twentieth Century literature") but his influence on the writing of our time is incalculable. His novel "Ulysses," which is well-known if not well-read, resulted in an historic decision by a famous supreme court justice who declared that the aforementioned novel (banned in the United States up to that time) was an enduring work of art and not unadulterated pornography. His last work, "Finnegans Wake," has never created the furore that attended the publishing of "Ulysses"; the chief reason behind this is its obscurity and unintelligibility.

The James Joyce Society has among its purposes the clarification of such difficulties, and these records, the result of a meeting at the Gotham Book Mart in New York on 23 October 1951, do much to forward the understanding and enjoyment of Joyce's work. In addition to readings from his works by Professor Joseph Campbell and Padraic Colum, there are discussions and comments on the author and his writing. The prize of the set, however, is the inclusion of a reading, by Joyce himself, of the "Anna Livia Plurabelle" section of "Finnegans Wake." This recording, over a period of years, reached a phenomenal price in its 78 rpm form; at one time it was manufactured and sold for \$12.50—a most unusual price for something not in the unobtainable class.

For those of our readers who know of James Joyce and would be interested in learning more about this controversial figure we believe this release to be of great value.

H.

Selections from the Writings of Thomas Mann. (Read in German). Thomas Mann (reader). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TFC-1004) \$4.95.

Caedmon Records seems well on the way to producing the finest discs (as to both content and quality) in its field. Readings from their own works by authors of distinction can, without much trouble, be extremely boring. This can be easily explained by the fact that a writer's greatness in literature does not always combine with an ability to read aloud with expression. This particular bugaboo has not shown itself in Caedmon's releases so far.

While this disc will be of interest only to those of our readers who understand German, or who are studying the language, we would like to mention

the fact that Mr. Mann's diction and expressiveness are particularly felicitous; no student of German will fail to be entertained and instructed by this fine reading. Thomas Mann has chosen from his writings *Tonio Kröger*, *Lob der Vergänglichkeit*, and *Die Busse* from "Der Erwählte."

ORGAN

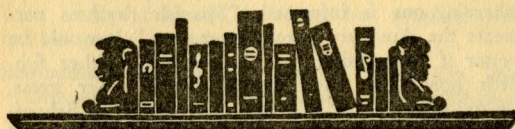


Bach: A German Organ Mass (Clavierübung, Part III). Helmut Walcha (organ). 3-12" discs in album (*D-DX-115) \$17.55.

Unfortunately our review copy had no first disc and two second discs, so this review cannot take into consideration the magnificent "St. Anne" Prelude and Fugue, three chorales, and four duettos, which occur on the first and sixth sides of this set of LP discs.

Previous organ discs in the Decca series played by Helmut Walcha have not appealed to us too much because of the squeaky organ and its odd assortment of whistles. It seems, however, that these old Baroque organs have some other pipes too, for this recording has many moments of grandeur, and while the richness and volume are there, so also is the clarity. Two organs have been used in this recording. For the parts written for manuals and pedal the organ at St. Jakobi, Lubeck was used; for the remainder, written for organ with manuals only, the Schnitger organ at Kappel was used. Walcha has been hailed by critics as one of the greatest living interpreters of Bach. His performance of the *Organ Mass* will serve as a model for many organists for decades to come. It is a masterpiece of understanding, and one can feel the knowledge and authority of this re-creator. We can only wish some of the perky, shrill, mutations had been omitted from the registration, for in some of the chorales, Walcha lets the whistles loose. Most of the time, the registration is pleasant. He has not quite the warmth of Noehren, whose recording of most of this music was accomplished for Allegro a short time ago (*AL-AL-57). Fritz Heitman recorded a cut version of the work some years ago for Telefunken, which is available on a Capitol LP (*CLP-8029). Both of these men use organs of the baroque variety also. The present set by Walcha would seem to be the ideal one to acquire for anyone seriously interested in this music. Heitmann's disc is recommended for the music lover who would like to sample the music, for his performance is excellent. The Walcha set is absolutely complete, including both the "greater" and "shorter" settings, twenty-seven sections in all, with thorough notes on both.

S.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletones, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Collosum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hadyon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ♪ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 8

OCTOBER, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

THE LATEST editions of the "Music America Loves Best" and "Request" catalogs have just been issued by RCA Victor, and these should now be available at your dealer's.

Readers will recall that the "MALB" catalog contains listings of records of wide and continued appeal and which should be stocked by most record dealers, while the "Request" catalog contains listings that are of interest mostly to the connoisseur of fine music and not generally stocked. "Request" items will be available to special order only and will take from two to four months for fulfillment.

If your local dealer cannot supply them, both of the above catalogs are now available from the publishers of this bulletin. The "Music America Loves Best" catalog (384 pp.) is 15c. The "Request" catalog (144 pp.) is 20c. Both prices are postpaid in U. S. A.

* * *

Dancing teachers and students know how difficult it is to find records that are suitable for teaching and practice and thus we believe that they will be glad to know that there is a series of discs made especially for them. These discs are Russell Records and are styled for the teacher's classroom use and for the students' home practice. There are 75 10-inch break-resistant 78 rpm plastic records in this series and the price is \$1.59 each. The number of bars of music and the metronome beat for each selection is indicated on the record label together with the types of dances that the particular selection is suitable for. These records were made under the direction of a dancing teacher who has had many years of outstanding success in his profession and we are very sure that they will be found to be practical in every way for the purpose for which they were de-

signed.

If your local dealer does not stock Russell Records, a printed list of the series will be sent gratis upon request. Orders for the records themselves will be promptly filled by the publishers of this bulletin. As mentioned above the price is \$1.59 each.

* * *

After many years Italian HMV has issued a new (1952) edition of the "La Voce del Padrone" catalog and we have no doubt that this will be cause for rejoicing among collectors of vocal records of historic interest. It would seem that the records of singers of the "golden age" never go out of date in Italy, for listed in the pages of this catalog are hundreds of records by Caruso, Cortis, de Muro, Fleta, Gigli, Martinelli, Pertile, Schipa, Tamagno, Zanelli, Bori, Galli-Curci, Galvany, Gatti, Patti, Ponselle, Raisa, Tetrizzini, Battistini, de Luca, Ruffo, Chaliapin, et al.

The publishers of this bulletin have secured a limited quantity of the 1952 "La Voce del Padrone" catalog (315 pp.) and will be happy to fill orders for it as long as the supply lasts. Price 50c (postpaid in U. S. A.).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these may be had at the special price of \$3 (postpaid within U.S.A.)

ORCHESTRA



Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50009) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50008) \$5.95.

Modern advertising, by constant use and misuse, has robbed many of our adjectives of their meaning. It no longer is possible to describe a piece of music or a recording in glowing terms without being suspect. It was Aldous Huxley who once suggested how nice it would be if there were a "word laundry" where words could be washed free of all the connotations they had accumulated from the fingerings of innumerable copy writers and ad men. All of this is a roundabout way of preparing the gentle reader of this review to give the old, the real values to the various and sundry adjectives that will be used below in commenting on these performances and recordings.

Two new issues by Mercury, who have adopted, with more justification than is usual in such cases, the slogan "Living Presence" to describe their Olympian series, are now available. Like the two previous releases by this orchestra, there is an indefinable quality about both performance and recording that raise them far, far above the average.

In recording these two staples of symphonic literature, Antal Dorati crosses batons with such famous names as Koussevitzky, Ormandy, Beecham and Stokowski, not to mention a host of others. It is a distinct source of pleasure to report that he not only holds his own but actually tops most of the efforts of his fellow artists. Rimsky-Korsakov's Symphonic Suite *Scheherazade* has long been a prime favorite and this exemplary performance, played, incidentally, in "straight" fashion (no excessive *rubati*, no fooling around for effects) is tremendously exciting.

Even more thrilling is the stunning performance and recording of the ever green *Symphony No. 5, in E minor* by the introspective and morbid Peter Illitch Tchaikovsky. The adjectives used to describe Tchaikovsky's mental processes and disposition cannot be used regarding this recording, however. Antal Dorati and his men deliver themselves of a magnificently extrovert reading that had this reviewer grinning broadly by the time the last movement arrived; and before the end of the symphony was reached he enjoyed one of the finest cases of horripilation yet achieved through the medium of records. The quality of recorded sound on both discs beggars description—the dynamic range must be heard to be believed!

If you want to treat yourself to the very best in recorded music, in addition to superlative performances, get all the records issued by Mercury of the talented Dorati and his superb orchestra. W.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. One and one-half sides, and **Franck: Variations Symphoniques.** Eileen Joyce (piano) with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-464) \$5.95.

Both of these recordings have been adapted from the 78 rpm editions which came out about five years ago in English Decca albums. The transfer to LP has been most satisfactorily accomplished. The pairing of these two works on one LP provides an extraordinary bargain; no other Franck *Symphony in D minor* on LP has any coupling. Considering the high quality of these works, we can easily recommend this disc as a best buy.

Since the original issue of each of these works, many other versions have appeared. The *Symphonic Variations* has had a notable re-recording by Gieseke, whose original version most persons considered the best. His new set (*C-ML-4536) is, if anything, better than the first recording he made of it. Moura Lympany, Robert Casadesu, and one or two others have formidable entries too. . . . The *Symphony* enjoys very few recordings as good as the present Münch set; Monteux's is considered good by many; some prefer Ormandy. But Münch can hold his own with any of them, and we prefer it to the others. The net result of these comparisons would point to this London disc if the coupling appeals to you. If you already own the *Symphony*, there are a few other good recordings of the piano work, notably Gieseke, available with different couplings. If you are looking for a good recording of the symphony, this London is easily the best buy, for you get not only the *Symphony*, but also a fine coupling.

It was Neville Cardus who, in his book "Ten Composers," gave a unique description of a musical panorama. He wrote of the peak of Palestrina, the mountain of Bach, the volcano of Beethoven, the courts and palaces of Mozart, the rocks and crags of Wagner and, in the distance, "the cathedral of César Franck." There could be no more perfect metaphor than this, particularly as regards the *Symphony*. The *Symphonic Variations* for piano are still another facet of Franck's ability; to many they represent his finest effort. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1713) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1713) \$5.72.

The LP catalog now lists ten versions of the *Brahms Fourth*, which include two on RCA Victor and three on Columbia. Victor's previous issue has not been out too long (Münch and the Boston Orchestra, *V-LM-1086). Columbia replaced an older and less satisfactory set by Ormandy with one

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

by Walter and the New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-4472) and they added their third LP when the Weingartner series was recently reissued. The other labels have nothing exceptional to offer in a *Fourth*. It is between Münch, Walter, and Toscanini. Those who revere Weingartner will find his interpretation one of high musical merit, if somewhat less than that as an orchestral performance and as an illuminating reproduction. The other three choices all have fine orchestras and good, modern reproduction. In a "blindfold" test, any average cross-section of music lovers would probably vote for the Walter recording. That version we recommend to those who like their music performed with breadth and feeling and warmth. Those who can stand a fresh and imaginative approach to a familiar work will find Münch's reading a challenging one. It will go against the grain with purists, despite the magnificent orchestral playing. That leaves us Toscanini, and it also leaves us the strict musicians who want their music laid on the line just as the score says it should be. There is a perfect match here, for those folks will find Toscanini does not disappoint them.

Following this recording with the score, it is just amazing how much Toscanini can clarify and how accurately he can deliver the music as written. When one listens to the recording without a score it is, to us at least, just as amazing how much of the glory of this music is missing in this performance. The striving for clarity results in too much attention and prominence to inner voices which destroy the general line and give some weird effects, notably in the first movement. With or without the score, there is a lack of lovely pianissimo playing in many places. The fortes invariably are fortissimos. We definitely prefer the heart of the interpreter rather than his iron hand; perfect music is not necessarily a rich musical experience. S.

Music of Erich Korngold. Hilde Zadek (soprano); Anton Dermota (tenor); Erich Korngold (piano); Austria State Orchestra conducted by Erich Korngold and Wilhelm Loibner. 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-46) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *Much Ado About Nothing*—incidental music (Austria State Orchestra conducted by Korngold). *The Dead City*—Glück das mir verblieb (Zadek and Dermota with Austria State Orchestra conducted by Loibner). *Die Kathrin*—Improvisations; *The Dead City*—Improvisations; *Violanta*—Improvisations; *Sonata No. 2 in C minor*—Largo; *Fairy Tales*, Op. 3—selections (Korngold at piano).

This disc, devoted to the music of Erich Korngold, commences with great promise and then descends with a thud to the level of the mediocre. First one hears the duet from *Die tote Stadt*; this is followed by a series of piano pieces, played by the composer, and includes such diverse items as a *pas-sacaglia* from the *D Minor Sonata*, fantasies on two

operas *Die tote Stadt* and *Violanta* and two excerpts from a collection of short piano pieces entitled *Fairy Tales*. The second side is devoted to the *Incidental Music* to Shakespeare's play "Much Ado About Nothing;" another operatic improvisation, this time on the opera *Die Kathrin*; and finally, the largo from the *C Minor Sonata*.

Easily the finest music on the record is the duet *Glück das mir verblieb*. It is beautifully sung by Hilde Zadek and Anton Dermota. After these soaring melodies are heard the disc deteriorates rapidly, musically speaking. The operatic fantasias are dull and pretentious and the piano compositions are inconsequential.

More ambitious is the *Incidental Music* to "Much Ado about Nothing." It is relatively light music, highly suitable for use in the theatre but unsubstantial when detached from its proper surroundings. The various sections recorded here, under the composer's direction, are: *Overture*, *Bridal Morning*, *Dogberry and Verges*, *Intermezzo* and *Masquerade (Hornpipe)*. The general effect is one of watered Prokoviev.

The Austria State Orchestra plays with reasonable accuracy but without much conviction. One comes away with the impression that had more space been given to selections from *Die Tote Stadt* it would be more worth while. Only devoted admirers of Erich Wolfgang Korngold could justify to themselves the price of this record. The general recording is good but in no way exceptional; the piano quality, however, is tinkling, definitely below average. W.

Panufnik: Suite of Ancient Polish Airs and Dances.

Radio Warsaw Orchestra conducted by Jerzy Kolaczowski. One side, and (7) **Polish Folk Songs**. Mazowsze Choral Ensemble with orchestra conducted by Tadeusz Sygietyński. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6001) \$5.95.

While this is a record designed particularly for those of Polish origin, it contains music that most any true music lover may enjoy. Panufnik is a present-day Polish composer and conductor, who possibly will be remembered in this country for his *Tragic Overture* which Stokowski introduced to us with the New York Philharmonic in 1949. His Suite, based on Polish folk dances collected in the 16th century by the monk Jan of Lublin, is a lovely work in five entrancing movements. . . . The Mazowsze Choral Ensemble is composed of ninety young people of peasant origin from the Mazowsze region in Central Poland—a section from which the best of Polish folk music emanates. The present conductor, Tadeusz Sygietyński, founded this organization in 1949 for the purpose of bringing to the people of Poland authentic folk music of their country in its purest form. The seven songs to be found on the present disc are the fruit of Sygietyński's research and should be of especial interest to students of the world's folk music.

We are very happy to report that these recordings made in Poland are of very high quality and anyone interested in this LP disc may rest assured that he will be pleased with both the performances and the reproduction.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D** ("The Clock"). Austria State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Busch. 1-12" disc (*MASTER-SEAL MW-9) \$6.45.

The late Fritz Busch, a conductor with few peers, is represented in performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8, F Major* and Haydn's *Symphony No. 101, D Major* ("Die Uhr"). As interpretations they are of a superior order, for Dr. Busch was not only a talented conductor, he was also a man of sensibility and refinement. The playing of the Austria State Orchestra (a vague, high-sounding name) is not notable for tonal beauty or flexibility, nor is the recording in any way exceptional except for portions of the Beethoven Eighth, which are exceptionally poor. A detailed biographical sketch of Dr. Busch is included. As a souvenir of the late conductor the record has merit but as recorded performances of the works there are far better, Scherchen's 101st on Westminster and Monteux's 8th on Victor to name but one other choice of each.

Haydn: Symphony No. 49 in F minor ("La Passione"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 73 in D** ("La Chasse"). Haydn Orchestra (London) conducted by Harry Newstone. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1052) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 92 in G ("Oxford"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G** ("Surprise"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5137) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G ("Surprise"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D** ("Clock"). RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9617) \$5.85.

Haydn: Symphony No. 96 in D ("Miracle"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 98 in B-flat**. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5111) \$5.95.

Of this group of Haydn Symphonies, the only one that has not appeared on LP before is *Symphony No. 49 in F minor* ("La Passione"). This rather unusual work dates from 1768 and because of its nickname it is thought that it was written when the composer was "deeply moved by the loss of a beloved person" or that it was motivated by the great fire of that year which nearly destroyed Eisenstadt and, in fact, burnt Haydn's own house to the ground. There are now fifty-seven Haydn

Symphonies represented in the LP catalogs with at least one recording—the more popular ones are available in many versions; for example, there are ten different recordings of the "Surprise," eight of the "Clock," five of the "Drum Roll," etc. As there are now 108 LP records containing Haydn Symphonies, anyone wishing to appraise and compare them might very well spend a full sabbatical year on such a project.

Sullivan: Overtures. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7006) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7006) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *The Mikado; The Pirates of Penzance; H. M. S. Pinafore; Iolanthe; The Yeomen of the Guard.*

If you are interested in G & S overtures, we can assure you that you are not likely to find better performances or finer recordings than RCA Victor has made available this month.

Spohr: Jessonda—Overture. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Goerlich. And **Gluck: Iphigenia in Aulis—Overture.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herman Abendroth. One side, and **Gluck: Alceste—Overture.** German Philharmonic Orchestra (Prague) conducted by Josef Keilberth. And **Spohr: Faust—Overture.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Goerlich. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7028) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

Haydn: Symphony No. 61 in D. Danish State Radio Chamber Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622.** Louis Cahuzac (clarinet) with the Danish State Radio Chamber Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1047) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Rubinstein: Concerto No. 4 in D minor, Op. 70. Oscar Levant (piano) with the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4599) \$5.45.

Rawsthorne: Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-513) \$4.95.

According to the catalogs at hand, this is the first time an Anton Rubinstein concerto has been recorded. This may seem strange considering the reputation of the man as a virtuoso pianist and composer of music in many forms. The fact remains, however, that as a composer, Rubinstein was not

destined to become one of the immortal greats. It was quantity rather than quality with him—not quality of workmanship, but quality of musical ideas. A few of his salon pieces have survived, the rest of his large output is rather justly forgotten. After hearing this concerto, one does wonder whether all of his music should not be surveyed again for a few things that have some worth. Certainly this concerto is the equal of some other concertos which appear on programs. It is a good, thick, romantic slice of music not unlike the Tchaikovsky First Concerto, lacking only the exceptional Tchaikovskian genius for melody. It is, nevertheless, a work that has great appeal. All of its possibilities are realized to the fullest extent by the performing artists, who scored a great success with it in the New York concerts last season. Levant plays the music with firm conviction and really makes something out of it. Mitropoulos is with him every minute with a sincere accompaniment. If you enjoy cascades of romantic piano music, this concerto will provide plenty of enjoyment. The reproduction is excellent.

Alan Rawsthorne is a British composer whose music is not blazing any new trails; it is built along conventional lines and designed for easy listening. The present work was composed in 1951. It was commissioned by the Arts Council of Great Britain for the national Festival of that year, and was first performed in the new Festival Hall by the same artists appearing in this recording. It therefore bears the stamp of authority, a fact which one gathers immediately upon hearing the performance. The work is in four movements, rather than three, in order to provide more contrast. The first movement is generally lyrical, the second a scherzo of rondo-like structure, the third is a slow movement followed by a brisk finale. The accompanying program notes by the composer provide a thorough analysis of the work. The performance and recording are both tops, and we recommend this new music as something well worth investigating.

S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Vladimir Horowitz (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1718) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1718) \$5.72.

Of all living pianists, few will deny that Vladimir Horowitz is equipped with the greatest technique. No pianist of our knowledge can excel him for sheer technical brilliance, manual dexterity, or whatever you wish to call it. He plays with deadly accuracy. Many of his recordings have served to demonstrate that he has also a fine interpretive gift. His Leonine power is admirably suited to the needs of the *Emperor Concerto*, for here is a work in the grand manner. It is built along bold lines, on a large scale, heroic, and of truly great substance. It has more than the key signature in common with the *Eroica Symphony*. The great orchestral chords followed by equally great arpeggios on the piano announce at

the very opening that here is a work of large dimension. And never once is the listener in doubt of that. No concerto which preceded this one was of such a scale, and none that have followed have exceeded it much, if at all. Audiences will be thrilled by it for generations to come.

Vladimir Horowitz and Fritz Reiner have combined to give us a reading which carries through the idea of this music as well as one could imagine its being done. Horowitz is so magnificent on the keyboard that he does not have to use any interpretive tricks to get the scale of this music across to the listener. It is just there every time he plays a note. We can sense many subtleties in this performance which take it out of the class of good note playing and definitely place it in the class of good, solid interpretation. It is a masterful statement of the music. Reiner's contribution, as would be expected, is no trifle, for Beethoven designed this work with the piano and orchestra in closer collaboration than ever before. The fabric is woven with both of equal power much of the way. The written cadenzas add to the seriousness and superlative finish of the work. It is a great work which is here receiving one of its greatest performances, one that we prefer to any previous efforts.

The reproduction is an example of RCA Victor's "New Orthophonic" recording technique, an old term resurrected for today's hi-fi enthusiasts. It is a model of clarity and beautiful timbre—with a happy lack of sizzle so prevalent in today's hi-fi discs. This disc is one of the best to come our way in many a day.

S.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622. Louis Cahuzac (clarinet) with the Danish State Radio Chamber Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 61 in D.** Danish State Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1047) \$5.95.

This Haydn Society disc is a real gem, combining as it does two works, the Mozart receiving its best LP performance, the Haydn its first recorded performance. This latter has the added distinction of being the 56th of Haydn's 104 Symphonies to reach records, a circumstance that would have seemed impossible even three years ago.

Mozart's *Concerto in A Major* is one of his greatest works and, though finished only a few months before his death, is imbued "with incomparable tenderness and warmth, and radiates that serene gaiety which was granted to Mozart even in times of utter distress" (Geiringer). The performance by the distinguished French clarinetist Louis Cahuzac and the Danish State Radio Orchestra under Mogens Wöldike can only be described as perfect. The phrasing, coloring, tempi and style are such as to be the despair of many other performers. The coupling is another of those delightfully exuberant symphonies Haydn wrote during his middle period when he first began to realize his

capabilities. He could write of his music at this time, with truth, that "he had the good fortune to please almost all nations." The *Symphony No. 61, D Major* is a prime favorite with conductor Wöldike and he and the orchestra lavish their combined talents on it and give a stylish and polished performance. Sterling reproduction has been accorded both works. W.

Handel: Concerto in F for String and Wind Instruments. One side, and **Handel: Concerto in B-flat for String and Wind Instruments.** Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen) conducted by Lavad Friisholm. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1049) \$5.95.

As far as we know these lovely little concerti have not been recorded before. If you would be interested in some Handel music that you have not heard before, here is some that is beautifully performed by fine artists and splendidly recorded. These recordings were made in Copenhagen during February and March of the present year.

Kabalevsky: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 48. David Oistrakh (violin) with the U.S.S.R. State Orchestra conducted by Dmitri Kabalevsky. One side, and **Khrennikov: Much Ado About Nothing—Suite.** U.S.S.R. State Orchestra conducted by Alexander Stassevich. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6002) \$5.95.

It is generally conceded these days that, Russian or not, David Oistrakh is one of the very greatest violinists of our time—and there are many who believe him to be the greatest. They will have more substantial proof with this recording of the Kabalevsky concerto. Oistrakh is magnificent in every sense of the violinists' art. We could not imagine a finer performance. With the composer conducting the accompaniment, this reading also has a stamp of authority as well as brilliance of execution. As for the music itself, Kabalevsky has contrived a concerto conventional in idea and workmanship. It is a typical "grand" concerto of heroic proportions, and is just as thrilling as you expect a concerto to be. Kabalevsky has not militated against the concerto writers from Beethoven to the later romantics, but has followed their paths, with very little to give it a modern flavor. It will be recognized as a contemporary work for its general characteristics, but not for any lack of melody or closely-packed mathematical complexities. In other words, it is very listenable. In addition, it has firm substance; while brilliant it is of a serious nature not to be confused with Kabalevsky's lighter works such as *The Comedians*. We think it is top-notch in every respect, and the performance and reproduction present it to the best effect.

The suite from *Much Ado About Nothing* is in seven movements intended to be interspersed between the scenes during performances of the Shakespeare play. The music is gay and buoyant, remin-

iscent of Russian music from Glinka to Shostakovich (of the merry scherzi). It is not particularly descriptive of *Much Ado About Nothing*, could probably fit half a dozen other plays, and therefore sounds very well as music by itself. It is easy listening for contemporary music and is quite well played and recorded here, making this an altogether worth while disc. S.

Spohr: Concerto No. 8 in A minor, Op. 47. Kurt Stiehler (violin) with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Paul Schmitz. One side, and **Spohr: Concerto No. 7 in E minor, Op. 38.** Rudolf Schulz (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7049) \$5.95.

Spohr: Jessonda—Overture. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Goerlich. And **Gluck: Iphigenia in Aulis—Overture.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herman Abendroth. One side, and **Gluck: Alceste—Overture.** German Philharmonic Orchestra (Prague) conducted by Josef Keilberth. And **Spohr: Faust—Overture.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Goerlich. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7028) \$5.95.

Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859) has been variously described as a "neo-classicist" and a "neo-romanticist" thus showing not only a certain amount of critical indecision but also indicating the essentially ambiguous nature of Spohr's writing. In addition to composing in almost every form, Spohr was, by all contemporary accounts, a superb violinist. He had very large hands enabling him to perform feats of double-stopping and wide stretches with ease. Of the two *Concerti* here recorded the *Eighth, in A Minor*, the so-called *Gesangenscene* shows the most formal originality but both are tuneful, not too difficult technically and are well played by the respective soloists. The music is pleasant, and offers no problems for the listener—in short, it is very respectable music, akin to that of Cherubini.

Urania also gives one the opportunity of hearing an operatic Spohr by recording the overtures to *Jessonda* and *Faust*. The former is an "Eastern" opera and relates the story of a Rajah's widow who is saved from having to commit *suttee* by her former sweetheart, a Portuguese general, who rejoices in the name of Tristan d'Acunha. *Faust*, the plot of which is quite different from Goethe's poem, is a somewhat earlier work, dating from 1813-1818. Both were successful in their day, but now only the overtures survive and these only in Germany. The music is colorful, demonstrating Spohr's own particular brand of chromaticism that was not without influence on such widely dissimilar composers as Wagner and Franck, Schumann and Tchaikovsky. Both overtures are given rousing performances by Gustav Goerlich and the Radio Berlin Orchestra.

This second record also includes well played versions of two Gluck overtures, *Alceste* and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (the latter in the Wagner edition). Conductor Keilberth plays the former with considerable *élan* but Herr Abendroth, suffering from very mediocre recording, does only fairly well with the latter.

The recording on both discs is not to this reviewer's liking, incidentally. It is harsh, limited in range and tiring to the ear. W.

Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26. Zino Francescatti (violin) with the N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Beethoven: Romance No. 1 in G, Op. 40** and **Beethoven: Romance No. 2 in F, Op. 50.** Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Morel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4575) \$5.45.

Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9007) \$3.99. Coupled with **Saint-Saëns: Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 75.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emmanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (V-LM-9007) \$5.72.

Saint-Saëns: Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 75. Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emmanuel Bay (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1658) \$3.99. Coupled with **Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9007) \$5.72.

The indestructible Bruch concerto appears again with two brand new recordings. The choice, however, is not a difficult one. It is practically a foregone conclusion that those who are interested in a violin and piano sonata have already passed the stage of the Bruch concerto—they already have it or do not care to have it. A few may want it for the artist who performs it—Heifetz. The majority of music lovers who derive pleasure from the Bruch concerto will find the lovely Beethoven Romances, violin solo with orchestral accompaniment, much more to their taste. And for once, they will not have to suffer a second-best version of the concerto to get a satisfactory coupling. Our preference for a recording of the concerto is clearly Francescatti, for he plays with a breadth and fervor that completely reveals the romantic beauty of the music. Heifetz, needless to say, plays magnificently as he always does. But from a musical, or interpretive, standpoint, we prefer Francescatti's approach and manner of handling the work. Some of the impassioned and songful melodies emerge with double the force and richness in the Francescatti disc. The matter of reproduction could be a bit responsible, for Columbia provides fuller and more luscious tone. But it is not only sound; tempo and breadth of style and

phrasing are beyond mechanical means, and it is in these matters that Francescatti serves a more satisfying dish than Heifetz. Maybe we are too swayed by these romantic works; but if you're doing romantic music, let's do it that way—within the bounds of good musical taste.

Beethoven's two *Romances* are beautifully lyric, broadly flowing works, composed presumably in 1802 or 1803, a few years before the great violin concerto which was written in 1806. They belong to the same period as the *Kreutzer Sonata* and the *Eroica Symphony*, and are wonderfully grateful music for the violinist. You will find them very interesting and truly appealing.

Streamlining the traditional structure of four movements, Saint-Saëns effected an economy of form and achieved added flexibility and grace in the two movement sonata. Each movement has two sections which give the total effect of four movements. Saint-Saëns' melodic gift is apparent in this work which Heifetz plays superbly. S.

Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. Camilla Wicks (violin) with the Radio Stockholm Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sixten Ehrling. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8175) \$4.98.

Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. Arnold Eidus (violin) with the Orchestra Society of Vienna conducted by Frederick Hummel. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata in A, Op. 100, No. 2.** Arnold Eidus (violin) and Leopold Mittman (piano). 1-12" disc (*STRADIVARI STR-611) \$5.95.

The first LP releases of the Sibelius Violin Concerto are recent additions to the ever-growing catalog of microgroove discs. Sibelius has been somewhat neglected both as to quantity and quality. Neither of these recordings is entirely satisfactory, but the Capitol version is infinitely preferable.

It was in 1903 that the virtuoso-violinist *manqué*, Jean Sibelius wrote his only violin concerto. Two years later he revised it and it was in this form that it had its first performance under the baton of no less a personage than Richard Strauss; Karl Halí was the soloist. Musically, it is a magnificent work, full of Sibelius' own particular brand of romanticism and, of course, his wonderful, sad and characteristically Nordic melodies. The concerto is in conventional, although not strict, form, the three movements being marked *allegro moderato*, *adagio di molto* and *allegro ma non tanto*. The *cadenza* occurs in the middle of the first movement but is not a show piece; rather it is an integral part of the movement. The song-like *adagio* is one of the few true slow movements Sibelius ever wrote and the finale partakes of the nature of a *danse macabre*. It is wonderful music.

Camilla Wicks and the Radio Stockholm Orchestra under Sixten Ehrling give a very fine performance. The formidable technicalities of the solo

part are executed with verve and, it would seem, sheer delight. Miss Wicks is a young violinist to be reckoned with. The orchestral support lent by Ehrling and his forces lacks the bite and drive of the old (78 rpm) Beecham performance. Stunning recording is supplied by Capital ("Full Dimensional Sound").

Stradivari has done a dubious thing in their recording. The soloist, Arnold Eidus was in one place and the orchestra in another, then the two tapes were combined. The result is fascinating but not a good record. The acoustics of the hall in which the violin part was recorded are vastly different from those of the hall in which the orchestra plays and this lends an eerie quality to the performance, which, incidentally, seems to be a first-rate one. The balance is poor, however, the orchestra being too far in the background. Stradivari has squeezed the *concerto* on one side (almost 32 minutes worth) and, on the reverse side, presses a recording of Brahms *Sonata in A Major*. Here Mr. Eidus is joined, in the same studio, by Leopold Mittman. The recording is better but even this bonus, as it were, is not enough to carry the disc in competition with the Capital recording which features better recording technically, superior orchestral forces and about one dollar lower price.

W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Prokofiev: Quintet, Op. 39. One side, and **Prokofiev: Overture on Hebrew Themes, Op. 34** and **Swanson: Night Music.** New York Ensemble of the Philharmonic Scholarship Winners conducted by Dmitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8511) \$4.85.

Prokofiev: Quartet No. 2 in F, Op. 92. Fine Arts Quartet. One side, and **Shostakovich: Trio in E minor, Op. 67.** Dmitri Shostakovich (piano), David Oistrakh (violin), Milos Sadlo (violin-cello). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10045) \$4.85.

Prokofiev: Quartet No. 2 in F, Op. 92. One side, and **Hindemith: Quartet No. 3, Op. 22.** Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8151) \$4.98.

All of the music on these three discs is already available on LP except Swanson's *Night Music* and Shostakovich's *Trio in E minor, Op. 67*. . . . The American Negro composer, Howard Swanson, was born in Atlanta in 1909. When a child his family moved to Cleveland, where Swanson received most of his musical education at the Institute of Music. A Rosenwald Fellowship enabled him to continue his studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris (1937). Since 1941 Swanson has made his home in New York City. The distinguished critic, Irving Kolodin, says that *Night Music* is a moody lyrical piece scored for string quartet, woodwinds and French horn not unlike portions of Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. . . .

Shostakovich's *Trio in E minor, Op. 67*, dates from 1944 and was dedicated to the memory of the eminent Soviet critic and writer on musical subjects, Ivan Sollertinsky. Sollertinsky was a close friend and advisor of Shostakovich for many years and immediately upon his death Shostakovich turned his attention to this seemingly inspired composition, which is considered by most critics as one of this important Soviet composer's best works in the field of chamber music. The present recording was made at Prague during May of 1946 when the composer was attending the annual music festival in the Czechoslovakian city. Shostakovich was joined by modern Russia's foremost violin virtuoso, David Oistrakh, and Milos Sadlo, a leading Czech concert violoncellist, in this outstanding recording.

Grieg: Sonata No. 1 in F, Op. 8. One side, and **Grieg: Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Frank Sheridan (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9571) \$5.85.

These little sonatas are not of great importance in the field of chamber music but as these recordings are the first to appear on LP, they are very welcome. Furthermore, as they have been beautifully performed by competent artists and splendidly recorded by Decca there is no need for any other recorded versions of them—other record publishers please note!

Handel: Sonata in E, Op. 2, No. 9 and **Handel: Sonata in B-flat, Op. 2, No. 4.** One side, and **Handel: Sonata in E minor, Op. 5, No. 3** and **Handel: Sonata in G minor, Op. 2, No. 8.** Willy and Margarete Schweyda (violins) and Jan Behr (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7046) \$5.95.

These gay and tuneful little works are played with style and spirit by able artists and have been faithfully recorded. Some persons may question the use of a piano for the figured bass instead of a harpsichord—the older instrument would have given them more of the flavor of the early 18th century, the period of their birth.

Shostakovich: Quartet No. 2, Op. 69. Rudolf Schulz Quartet: R. Schulz, W. Kirch (violins); H. Wigand (viola); R. Klemm (violin-cello). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7040) \$5.95.

The present recording, an excellent one as to both performance and reproduction, is an important one because it gives music lovers in this country an opportunity to study and appreciate Shostakovich's second string quartet. This work dates from 1944 and is in four movements: Overture; Recitative and Romance; Valse; and Theme with Variations.

On the first hearing we found this work quite attractive and relatively easy to listen to. Is it that Shostakovich is trying to attract the Russian masses to chamber music? As we listened to this quartet the second time, we had a feeling that the composer

was writing something that he thought would be attractive to the average music lover.

We doubt that history will place this work with the best chamber works of Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven but we do feel that it is above average and that it is a composition that rates serious consideration.

Telemann: Overture in D. One side, and **Haydn: Concerto in D for Flute and Orchestra.** Scheck-Wenzinger Chamber Group. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7031) \$5.95.

In the copious notes by Edward Tatnall Canby that accompany this LP disc, Mr. Canby points out that it is practically impossible in any reasonable length of time properly to identify these works and that as both of them are mighty pleasing to listen to, it is more important to make them available to the listening public than to prove their identity. He is not at all sure that the Flute Concerto is truly a Haydn composition; but if it is not, he is positive that it is by one of Haydn's contemporaries. Canby further points out that Telemann, Bach's contemporary in Germany, wrote about 600 "Overtures in the French style" and because Telemann's music practically ceased to be heard during the 19th century it is almost an impossibility to identify such an item as the present *Overture in D*—there were probably dozens of them. This all leads us to suggest that those music lovers who like to listen to music that is pleasing and that will be new to them investigate the present LP disc listed above. The performances and the reproduction are of high calibre.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 210 ("Hochzeits Kantate"). Magda Laszlo (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5138) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 202 ("Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 161** ("Komm du süsse Todesstunde"). Soloists with the Bach Guild Choir and Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-513) \$5.95.

Arias and Duets from Bach's Church Cantatas. Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-115) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Cantata No. 68*—Mein gläubiges Herze; *Cantata No. 159*—Es ist vollbracht; *Cantata No. 113*—Jesus nimmt die Sünder an; *Cantata No. 157*—Ja, ja, ich halte Jesum feste; *Cantata No. 185*—Sei bemüht in dieser Zeit; *Cantata No. 99*—Wenn des Kreuzes Bitterkeiten.

Bach Cantatas, once so rare on phonograph records, have now reached the incredible total of thirty-seven, and many of these are available in

two, a few in three, versions. And one of the astonishing facts is that, despite this plentitude, very few are given poor performances.

Three hitherto unrecorded Cantatas are to be considered here. First is a superlative addition to Westminster's already distinguished series, *Cantata No. 210*, the "Hochzeits Kantate." This is for solo soprano and consists of five major arias and five associated recitatives. It is a secular work and was written for performance at the wedding breakfast or banquet. Music, singing and recording are all on an extraordinarily high plane. Miss Laszlo, despite the almost impossibly high tessitura of the part sings with charm and style; Herr Scherchen, an old hand with Bach, keeps things moving in fine style.

Another "Wedding" Cantata, this time *No. 202* turns out to be a shorter work, but built along the same lines as *No. 210*. It is undeniably fine music but not quite as inspired as the *Hochzeits Kantate*. Miss Felbermeyer sings with consummate ease and with characteristic tonal beauty. Felix Prohaska and the Bach Guild Orchestra supply a distinguished accompaniment. The other side of this disc is devoted to a performance of the *Cantata No. 161, Komm du süsse Todesstunde* by Hilde Rössel-Majdan and Waldemar Kmentt with chorus. This is a comparatively early composition, written when Bach was about thirty. It is interesting to note that while this is a funeral ode, it is in no way gloomy. The Cantata is very well sung and the over-all performance is highly successful.

M-G-M has issued a second record by the Bach Aria Group under W. H. Scheide. The same outstandingly fine features as noted about their previous release *Six Sacred Arias* (TNR Feb. '52) are in evidence here. It is a worthy companion piece to the earlier recording and is recommended to those whose taste does not run to complete Cantatas. Excellently recorded. W.

Bloch: Israel Symphony. (Sung in English). Soloists of the Akademiechor with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-423) \$5.95.

Ernest Bloch, who recently (July 24th) celebrated his 72nd birthday, has long been considered an American composer despite his Swiss birth, for he has resided in this country since 1916. He is one of the foremost serious musicians of his race and has written eloquent music based on Jewish history, among which the *Sacred Service* (*Avodath Hakodesh*), *Schelomo*, *Baal Schem* and now the *Israel Symphony* have been recorded on LP.

Also called a "fresco of Hebrew Struggle," the *Israel Symphony* was written between 1912-1916 when the world was, as Mr. Bloch observes, "in about the same predicament as presently." When the work was first composed he had no conscious program in mind; but some thirty years later, becoming impatient with "false attributions and judg-

ments," Bloch decided to write "program notes" for it himself. These are reproduced on the jacket.

The music, sombre, joyous and plaintive in turn, is "modern" in conception—not dissonant, however, and not a reconstitution of Jewish music. Neither are the melodies authentic Hebrew ones ("I am not an archaeologist."). The opening passage, *adagio molto* ("Prayer in the Desert") is followed by an *allegro agitato* ("Yom Kippur"). The last section, *moderato* ("Succoth") is contemplative, a sort of prayer and it is here that the human voice is introduced.

Franz Litschauer and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and soloists handle the difficult score with aplomb and understanding. Herr Litschauer's task is no easy one, and the careful preparation that was obviously given the piece pays dividends.

Vanguard has supplied an excellent technical job, and the notes are both authoritative and informative. It is a disc that contains much of interest and should find, as it deserves, a wide audience. W.



OPERA

Berg: Lulu (complete). (Sung in German). Ilona Steingruber (soprano) and Otto Wiener (baritone) with soloists of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Herbert Häfner. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-121) \$17.35.

Alban Berg (1885-1935) is known chiefly, in this country, for his first opera *Wozzeck* and the *Lyric Suite*. The present work, not as yet given in this country, is a further development and refinement of the ideas that made the first opera so revolutionary, i. e. the method of characterizing by means of special harmonic sequences. This, coupled with Berg's belated romanticism and his studies with Arnold Schönberg, places a unique stamp on all his writings.

Lulu, in all events, will remain as controversial as any work that departs so violently from the artistic norm. There are those to whom the piece is a magnificent work of art, to others it is trash, and not very high-grade trash at that. The story, described as "a tragedy of sex" and "the shocking story of a sensual woman's loves" is as sordid and, to this listener, as meaningless as last year's baseball scores. The music written for this libretto is obscure, although obviously well planned—and, in addition to more than a modicum of good-will, requires more than one hearing. The soloists are obviously capable. Miss Steingruber, in the name part, proves an excellent actress and a sure vocalist. Otto Wiener, as Dr. Schön and all the others in the long cast submit knowing performances. The late Dr. Häfner (he died a few weeks after recording the opera) is more than competent and threads his way through the complex score with sureness and good theatrical sense.

Yet one comes away from the score with a feeling of incompleteness. Fortunately there are not too many *Lulu*'s (or are there?) in this world—but to spend approximately two hours tracing the sordid history of only one of them down to her death at the hands of Jack-the-Ripper is depressing in the extreme. Berg's choice of libretti for his two operas strikes this reviewer as incomprehensible. The only plausible explanation is one offered by Paul Láng in his monumental study *Music in Western Civilization*, where he writes, "Lack of spiritual ideals, submission to materialism and technicalism, and a resultant hunger for sensation and bluff, created an atmosphere in which philosophical and aesthetic judgements were vacillating, and a normal and purposeful development of artistic individuality was made exceedingly difficult." This is one view; the other describes Berg's death before completing the score of *Lulu* as "an artistic catastrophe." Take your choice. W.

Purcell: Dido and Aeneas (complete). (Sung in English). Kirsten Flagstad, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (sopranos); David Lloyd (tenor); Thomas Hemsley (baritone); with supporting soloists, the Mermaid Singers and Orchestra conducted by Geraint Jones. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WHMV-1007) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1007) \$5.95.

The chances of Kirsten Flagstad's making her "complete" opera debut on LP records in anything but a Wagnerian music drama would have been considered at least 1,000 to 1; and yet such is the case. Indeed it is a far cry from Purcell to Wagner, from *Dido* to *Isolde*; but Mme. Flagstad, with superb artistry, makes the stylistic transition with nary a slip. Her ill-fated queen is regal to her finger tips and one can say truthfully that it far overshadows the previous interpretations of the role on records. There is a plentitude of voice, a sureness and a grasp of both music and character that make her performance one of the year's outstanding experiences.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is a superb Belinda. Her voice provides the necessary contrast to the dramatic soprano of *Dido*, and she negotiates the style with ease and slips into the character in convincing fashion. Minor roles—witches, ladies and the like—are in extraordinarily fine hands, but special mention must be made of the Sorceress of Arda Mandikian and the Second Witch of Anna Pollak. Thomas Hemsley, an excellent baritone, does wonders with the (here) wishy-washy Aeneas, while David Lloyd delivers the lines of the sailor robustly.

The libretto, excellent from a dramatic standpoint and economy of means, is the work of one of Purcell's contemporaries, Nahum Tate. Tate, we are told, was "an honest, dull man, downcast in expression and given to fuddling but—a very good-natured drinking companion"—by and large, an appropriate nature for a librettist.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Geraint Jones, who directs the performance, shows loving care for the score, and the smoothness of the presentation bears witness to the careful rehearsing that went before. HMV has done a fine job technically, and RCA Victor deserves nothing but praise for the attractive package that includes notes and libretto—both of which are attractive and informative. W.

Puccini: La Tosca (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia (soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Armando Borgioli (baritone), supporting soloists, chorus and orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Oliviero de Fabritiis. 9-7" discs in box (♭V-WCT-82) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LCT-6004) \$11.44.

Tosca (soprano).....Maria Caniglia
Cavaradossi (tenor).....Beniamino Gigli
Scarpia (baritone).....Armando Borgioli
Angelotti (bass).....Ernesto Dominici
Sacristan (baritone).....Giulio Tomei
Spoletta (tenor).....Nino Mazziotti
Sciarrone (bass).....Gino Conti
Shepherd Boy (soprano)....Anna Marcangeli

This recording was released by RCA Victor during January 1940 and was acclaimed by the critics at that time as certainly the best recorded version of *Tosca* available and one of the most successful operatic recordings made up until that time. During the dozen years since its release it has enjoyed a continued popularity among discerning opera lovers; and we believe today it will demand the attention, if for no other reason, for the brilliance of its cast headed by the incomparable Gigli. RCA Victor has been very successful in transferring this recording from 78 rpm to LP discs; the reproduction, while not the best of high fidelity, is, to say the least, entirely satisfactory. As with the 78 rpm set, a very splendid booklet, giving the Italian text with an interlinear English translation and very full stage directions, is included. With this fine booklet describing each scene and the action in great detail one may sit back in his easy chair and enjoy a very fine performance of one of Puccini's most popular operas.

Certainly phonograph records have not been caught in the inflationary spiral that has seemed to have ensnared practically everything else—the present *Tosca* recording when it was released on 78 rpm records in 1940 was priced at \$28; today it is available on either 45's or LP's at much less than one-half of that price.

Gluck: Alceste (complete). (Sung in French). Ethel Semser (soprano); Enzo Seri (tenor); Bernard Demigny (baritone); with supporting soloists, Paris Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 3-12" discs in album (*OC-OCLP-304) \$18.50.

A fascinating addition to the operatic repertory

on records is Oceanic's recording of Gluck's historic *Alceste*. The recent revival of this glorious work at the Metropolitan Opera House whetted many appetites and while the singers here are not as good, the music sounds splendid, justifying the project.

Alceste was first produced in 1767 as an Italian opera; it was later revised and the libretto rewritten in French for the Paris production some four years later. It was for this opera that Gluck and Calzabigi (the original librettist) wrote the famous preface setting forth their ideas, that in opera, music must be the obedient hand-maiden of the words ("Fortunately", wrote Berlioz, an ardent admirer of Gluck's, "he did not succeed in putting this impious idea into practice.").

The cast, headed by Ethel Semser in the title role, struggles valiently with the difficult music but often comes off second best. Mme. Semser turns in a sincere and well-conceived performance but is not equal to all the demands placed on her light mezzo-soprano. There is often a sense of strain in her singing although her essential musicianship and stylistic insight seldom desert her. Enzo Seri, as Admetus, displays the same virtues (spirit, understanding and sincerity) and the same faults (a poor upper register and an essentially non-operatic voice) as he did in the Renaissance recording of *Le Pecheurs des Perles*. Unfortunately the faults, not so serious in the Bizet score, are of more consequence here. Bernard Demigny is satisfactory in the dual roles of the High Priest and Apollo, though no great shakes vocally. Minor roles are cast with varying degrees of success.

René Leibowitz does a fine job with his chorus and orchestra. Both sound extremely good and since a great part of the music is allotted to them, much of the credit for the general effect and impact the score makes must accrue to them. Generally good recording has been achieved, a libretto is supplied and excellent notes on the work are furnished by conductor Leibowitz. W.

David: La Perle du Bresil—Charmant Oiseau. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. One side, and **Proch: Air and Variations**. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-14) \$2.85.

As we recall we were not too much impressed with these recordings of Miss Pons when they were released on shellac discs in the autumn of 1945. As we remember it, her voice on the 78 rpm records had a rather wiry tone that was not at all pleasant. We are happy to say that this fault is not in evidence on the present LP disc. If you would like recordings of these popular coloratura selections by Miss Pons, you will find the present LP ones entirely satisfactory.

VOCAL



Loewe: (5) Ballads. (Sung in German). William Warfield (baritone) with Otto Herz (piano). One side, and **Ancient Music of the Church.** (Sung in Latin). William Warfield (baritone) with Andrew Tietjen (organ). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4545) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Kleiner Haushalt*, Op. 71; *Des Glockentürmers Töchterlein*, Op. 112a; *Hochzeitlied*, Op. 20, No. 1; *Süßes Begräbnis*, Op. 62; *Odins Meeresritt*, Op. 118 (Loewe). *Recitativo in stilo oratorii* (Schütz). *De profundis* (Hammerschmidt). *Conductus: Homo vide* (Perotinus). *Laudate dominum* (Monteverdi).

Wolf: Italienisches Liederbuch (selections). (Sung in German). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) accompanied by Hertha Klust (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9632) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Gesegnet sei, durch den die Welt entstand*; *Selig ihr Blinden*; *Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*; *Nun lass uns Frieden schließen*; *Hoffärtig seid Ihr, schönes Kind*; *Geselle, woll'n wir uns in Kutten hüllen*; *Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben sehen*; *Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt*; *Ein Ständchen euch zu bringen*; *Was für ein Lied*; *Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen meine Glieder*; *Und steht ihr früh am Morgen auf*; *Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter*; *Wie viele Zeit verlor ich*; *Heut' Nacht erhob ich mich*; *Nicht länger kann ich singen*.

Two of the younger generation of baritones are represented on records this month and both show considerable improvement over their previous releases.

In the case of William Warfield it is a matter of musical values. His previous disc *Old American Songs and Sea Chanties* (TNR Jan. '52) was nothing much from a musical standpoint; but here he has an opportunity to show what he can do with material worth his mettle. He emerges as a first-rate artist on this record while vocally he strengthens an already secure position. Side one is devoted to selections described as *Ancient Music of the Church* and comprises works by Schütz, Hammerschmidt (1612-1675), Perotinus, and Monteverdi. These items are new to records, having been taken from the private collection of Yves Tinayre. Needless to say they are sung with feeling and superior vocalism. A complete change of atmosphere is provided by the five Loewe Ballads on the other side. These wonderful dramas in miniature, four of which are new to LP records (*Kleiner Haushalt*; *Des Glockentürmers Töchterlein*; *Hochzeitlied* and *Süßes Begräbnis* along with the previously recorded *Odins Meeresritt*) are always interesting and are sung with understanding and astonishing virtuosity.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is known in this country

through his Decca releases that have been well received. The improvement here is not so much a matter of musical value as it is the selection of more congenial material. These sixteen songs from the *Italienisches Liederbuch* are presented in a convincing manner that tends to substantiate the claim that Herr Fischer-Dieskau is regarded as "one of Europe's outstanding musical talents".

Recording in both instances is very good but Columbia is woefully remiss as regards notes, and texts are non-existent. Decca furnishes good notes but is content with English prose translations of the German texts. W.

A Margarete Klose Song Recital. (Sung in German). Margarete Klose (contralto) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7053) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *In der Mondnacht* (Cornelius). *Herbststurm*; *Eros*; *Der Jäger*; *Weihnachts Wiegenlied*; *Unter Rosen* (Grieg). *Geduld* (R. Strauss). *Der Schmied*; *O lass dich halten, gold'ne Stunde*; *Über Nacht* (Jensen). *Im Herbst*; *Zum Abschied meiner Tochter*; *Die Einsame*; *Nachts* (Pfitzner).

Mahler: Lieder aus der Jugendzeit ("Songs of Youth"). (Sung in German). Anny Felbermayer (soprano) and Alfred Poell (baritone) accompanied by Viktor Graef (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-424) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz*; *Ablosung im Sommer*; *Serenade*; *Phantasie*; *Frühlingsmorgen*; *Schneiden und Meiden*; *Rheinlegendchen*; *Aus! Aus!*; *Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen*; *Selbstgefühl*; *Erinnerung*; *Nicht Wiedersehen!*; *Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht*; *Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen Wald*; *Starke Einbildungskraft*; *Hans und Grethe*.

Unhackneyed is the only word that describes the lieder selected by Margarete Klose for her song recital as recorded by Urania. Five composers are represented, Cornelius, Grieg, R. Strauss, Pfitzner and Jensen. The last named will be, in all probability, unknown to most music lovers except those specializing in German lieder.

There are fourteen songs in all, the majority of which are, in addition to being beautifully sung, of considerable charm. Space precludes a detailed discussion, but mention must be made of the lovely *Weihnachts Wiegenlied* of Grieg and Cornelius' *In der Mondnacht*. The principle curiosa of the disc are three songs by Adolf Jensen (1837-1879). Jensen was one of the many followers of Schumann and has been referred to as "pleasant, sensitive and somewhat effeminate" (Einstein). Grove is a little more generous if a little vague "sincere, healthy and refreshing but lacking the sterner qualities . . . of the masters." If one heard these songs without knowing the composer the first guess would almost certainly be Schumann.

Margarete Klose is one of the fine artists singing today. Her voice is still a magnificent one, expressive, colorful and intelligently used. An excellent disc worthy of investigation. Texts and translations are supplied.

The *Lieder aus der Jugendzeit* will also be new to most collectors and, although some of these songs have appeared with orchestral accompaniment on previous Vanguard releases of Mahler's songs, they are presented here in their original versions with piano accompaniment.

It would be difficult to imagine two finer singers than Poell and Felbermeyer and Vanguard's recording is top drawer. All sixteen of the songs are delightful, being remarkably free from the exhibitionism that spoils (for this reviewer, at least) so much of Mahler's music. The disc is unreservedly recommended. W.

Satie: Socrate. (Sung in French). Soloists with the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rene Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*ESOTERIC ES-510) \$5.95.

In 1916, Carl Van Vechten, writing about Erik Satie, suggests that he (Satie) should be credited with having started the French Renaissance in music. Satie was contemporary with such fabulous figures as Paul Verlaine, Jules Laforgue, Catulle Mendès (he of the "pale hair and fragile face illuminated with the idealism of a depraved woman") (!), Degas, Monet, Renoir and many others. Among musicians there were Gounod, Massenet and Saint-Saëns and others in Satie's Paris.

A strange figure, this Erik Satie, a shy and genial fantasist who wrote music, curious music, most of it with curious titles. He had little connection with the past (one must go back to Gregorian Chant for influences) and not much with the present. He has written a *Mass for the Poor*, ditties for a Music Hall queen, preludes to plays by Jules Bois and Sâr Péle-dan. He has also celebrated the lives, as Van Vechten notes, of unfamiliar sea creatures, the *Holothurie*, the *Edriophthalma* and the *Podophthalma* and he has composed a fugue "in the form of a pear."

In his later years (he died in 1925) Satie eschewed much of the *blague* of his formative period and *Socrate*, dating from 1918, is a relatively straightforward work. It is a "symphonic drama" and is based on Victor Cousins translation of passages from the Platonic dialogs. The work is divided into three sections: *Portrait of Socrates*, *By the Banks of the Ilyssus* and *Death of Socrates*. *Socrate* is scored for *cor anglais*, horn, trumpet, tympani and strings and requires four women's voices. The form of the piece in Martin Cooper's words, is that of a "continuous chanting, melodic psalmody, rather than recitative, and the extreme monotony of this was plainly deliberate."

The four soloists are well equipped and sing with accuracy and pleasing intonation. Rene Lieb-

owitz directs the performance with loving care and the result is authoritative if not sensuous or exciting.

The recording is first-rate and the complete text is furnished. W.

Lehar: The Merry Widow. (Sung in English).

Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Rounseville (tenor) with supporting cast, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 4-10" discs in album (C-C-320) \$4.31. 4-7" discs in box (øC-B-320) \$3.91. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4666) \$5.45.

Perhaps we should have disqualified ourselves when it came to reviewing this fine, practically complete recording of *The Merry Widow*. As we sit quietly in our easy chair with our favorite pipe and listen to the familiar selections, it is very likely that we are in our mind's eye adding much that is not coming from the phonograph. We who remember the original New York production with Ethel Jackson and Donald Brian, which came to us in our romantic youth, cannot restrain the thrilling memories that come to our mind as we listen to these nostalgic melodies. It is very likely that this recording will mean much more to us than it will to the present generation of young folks, and it is also likely that our judgment will be heavily weighted by our delightful memories. We did not disqualify ourselves but we are admitting that we are very much prejudiced.

The present recording was produced under the direction of Goddard Lieberson, and we think Mr. Lieberson did a superb job. Dorothy Kirsten is an ideal Sonia and Robert Rounseville, who will be remembered most favorably for his Hoffman in London's great recording of *Tales of Hoffman*, gives us a Danilo who would have certainly made the hearts of the young ladies of our generation miss a beat now and then. Miss Kirsten and Mr. Rounseville are ably supported by capable principals, an excellent chorus, and orchestra. We think this recorded version of *The Merry Widow* is grand and we hope that is well received.

Great Combinations. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1703) \$6.29. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1703) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny* and *My Old Kentucky Home*—Marian Anderson (contralto) and Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello); *Ombra mai fu* (from "Xerxes") and *In the Silence of Night* (Rachmaninoff)—Robert Merrill (baritone) and Yehudi Menuhin (violin); *Angel's Serenade* (Braga) and *O Dry Those Tears* (del Riego)—Jan Peerce (tenor) and Mischa Elman (violin); *None but the Lonely Heart* (Tchaikovsky) and *Calm as the Night* (Böhm)—Ezio Pinza (basso) and Nathan Milstein (violin); *Barcarolle* (from "Tales of Hoffman") and *Elégie* (Massenet)—Risë Stevens (soprano) and Mischa Elman (violin).

In the early days of the Victrola "Great Combinations" were very much the order of the day—

McCormack and Kreisler; Gluck and Zimbalist; Caruso and Elman are a few good examples. And how such records sold—everyone who had a Victrola had at least a couple of them in his collection. We wonder if the present generation of phonograph owners will find such items attractive. We can watch the sales of the present recordings for the answer.

If you think that you would like these favorite selections sung by an outstanding artist with piano accompaniment and either a violin or 'cello obbligato by a well-known soloist, we suggest that you investigate the present set of 45's or the LP disc listed above.

Jan Peerce Sings Hebrew Melodies. Jan Peerce (tenor) with orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7003) \$5.14. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7003) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: Kol Nidrei; A Dudele; Eili, Eili; A Cantor for a Sabbath; A Plea to God; A Shepherd, a Dreamer; Glick; Mayerke, mein zun.

A Jan Peerce Serenade. Jan Peerce (tenor) with The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 3-10" discs in album (V-DM-1514) \$4.50. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1514) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-143) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: Song of Songs; Sylvia; Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life; When You and I Were Young, Maggie; Silver Threads Among the Gold; Serenade (Schubert); Bless This House; Student Prince—Serenade (Herbert).

RCA Victor has taken several best-selling singles of Jan Peerce's renditions of Jewish selections and placed them on a single LP disc; this should prove to be a popular move for those who might like to have all these numbers on one record. . . . The Jan Peerce Serenade was reviewed in the July 1951 issue, and is listed here only to announce that it is now available on LP. NOTE: Schubert's Serenade and the Serenade from "Student Prince" are not included in the 78 rpm nor the 45 rpm versions.

(7) **Polish Folk Songs.** Mazowsze Choral Ensemble with orchestra conducted by Tadeusz Sygietynski. One side, and **Panufnik: Suite of Ancient Polish Airs and Dances.** Radio Warsaw Orchestra conducted by Jerzy Kolaczowski. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6001) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

DICTION



Shaw: Don Juan in Hell. First Drama Quartette: Charles Boyer, Charles Laughton, Cedric Hardwicke and Agnes Moorehead. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-166) \$12.11.

One of the most successful theatrical ventures of recent years was the First Drama Quartette's reading of Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell*. Four distinguished

players in evening dress, each at a reading desk, on an empty stage read this portion of *Man and Superman*; and audiences in cities large and small all over the country were held spellbound simply by what they heard; there was nothing for them to see. It would seem that the present recorded version, which gives one all that one could get in the theatre, should enjoy a tremendous sale. Certainly it is much more convenient (and very much more comfortable) to listen to the voices of these players in the privacy of one's own living room; and it is very much less expensive when we consider that our family and friends can enjoy it too at no extra cost. Also we are sure that *Don Juan in Hell* is the sort of work that the interested listener would like to hear again and again—it would be a most discerning person who could get even half of what Shaw is driving at on the first hearing. We might mention that if you are planning to go to the theatre to hear the First Drama Quartette (we understand that they will appear in a number of cities during the coming season), you will enjoy and appreciate their reading much more if you will either carefully read Shaw's text or listen carefully to this recording before you attend the performance.

Selections from the Writings of Tennessee Williams. Tennessee Williams (reader). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1005) \$4.99.

As one of the outstanding playwrights of our day, Tennessee Williams has made quite a name for himself. Two of his plays have, in addition, been translated successfully to the movie screen. It is, therefore, gratifying to discover that he can also present selections from his writings with equal facility as reader. Mr. Williams delivers the opening and closing scenes from *The Glass Menagerie*, reads a short story, *The Yellow Bird*, and recites some of his verse, including *Some Poems Meant for Music*; *Cried the Fox*; *The Eyes*; and *The Summer Belvedere*.

ORGAN



Romantic Reveries. Virgil Fox (organ). 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-18) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *Lohengrin*—Bridal Chorus (Wagner); *None but the Lonely Heart* (Tchaikovsky); *Dreams* (McAmis); *Ich liebe dich* (Grieg); *Jocelyn*—Berceuse (Godard); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—Wedding March (Mendelssohn).

When we first looked at this record, we thought that it might be used for weddings but after we listened to the *Lohengrin* Wedding March we gave up that idea in a hurry. We don't know just what Mr. Fox did to this selection but we do know that anyone trying march to his music would probably trip and fall on his face. As for the other selections, we can't get very much enthused about them either—we don't know whether Mr. Fox pulled out too

* indicates LP 83 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

many stops or whether the recording technicians did a poor job or what, but for the most part the selections sound as if they were played on a movie organ and not a very good movie organ at that.

PIANO



Grieg: (20) Lyric Pieces. Grant Johannesen (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7380) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Folk Song; Arietta; Wedding Day at Trolldhaugen; Elegy; Homage to Chopin; Evening on the Mountain; At the Cradle; Puck; Homesickness; Halling; Little Bird; Valse Impromptu; Nocturne; Norwegian Melody; Lonely Wanderer; Elf Dance; Bell Ringing; March of the Dwarfs; Papillon; Mountaineer Song.*

Grieg wrote some sixty *Lyric Pieces*—he was composing them throughout his life. Of these, Grant Johannesen has selected twenty of the more popular for the present LP disc. Here is a recording that should appeal to all piano students for certainly nearly every student has at one time or another been given the task of memorizing and playing at least one or two of the pieces included in the present group. Johannesen performs them nicely, and they have been well recorded by Vox.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux").** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9582) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 15 in D, Op. 28 ("Pastorale"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 2, No. 2.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9585) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 13 in E-flat, Op. 27, No. 1 ("Quasi una Fantasia"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in D, Op. 10, No. 3.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9584) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9587) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 16 in G, Op. 31, No. 1.** Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5133) \$5.95.

Wilhelm Kempff and Kurt Appelbaum continue with their series of Beethoven Sonata recordings; those who are interested in these will know which artist they prefer and will be guided accordingly. It is only for us to announce the new additions to each series as it is released.

Piano Music of Liszt and Schumann. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-515) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Années de Pèlerinage (2de Année)*—Sonetto del Petrarca No. 47 in D-flat; Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104 in E-flat; Sonetto del Petrarca No. 123 in A-flat (Liszt). *Papillons, Op. 2; Arabesque, Op. 18* (Schumann).

We are sure that Wilhelm Kempff's host of admirers on this side of the Atlantic will be delighted to know that this splendid LP disc is available. It contains an intimate little recital by this world renowned artist. As we listened to it, we had the impression that Herr Kempff was with us in person—playing just for our personal enjoyment—it has no tang of the concert hall filled with a large audience.

A Chopin Recital. Julius Katchen (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-554) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Ballade No. 3 in A-flat, Op. 47; Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp minor, Op. 39; Fantasia in F minor, Op. 49.*

Brahms: Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24. Julius Katchen (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-552) \$4.95.

More and more music lovers are becoming interested in the recordings of the fine young pianist, Julius Katchen, and thus it would seem that the discs listed above have a ready market of reasonable size awaiting them. We were particularly impressed with Mr. Katchen's performance of Brahms' *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24.*

A Liszt Recital. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-10" disc (*CML-2209) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Mephisto Waltz; Consolation No. 3 in D-flat; Rhapsodie Espagnole.*

A Liszt Album. Earl Wild (piano). 1-12" disc (*STRADIVARI STR-607) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor; Etude in D-flat; Berceuse; Polonaise in E; Ballade; Dance of the Gnomes.*

Here is a feast for those persons who are interested in Liszt. We must warn our readers that although Earl Wild plays his selections in fine style the reproduction is not all that one could ask for—there seems to be a metallic tang that is not at all pleasant. The Gyorgy Sandor disc is highly satisfactory in all respects.

MISCELLANEOUS



Tejera: Alegrias y Penas de Andalucia ("Joys and Sorrows of Andalusia"). Pepe Valencia (vocal) and Luis Maravilla (guitar). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5135) \$5.95.

An unusual disc, in every sense of the word, is issued by Westminster, this month. Spanish music, the genuine article that is, is well off the beaten

track, and this extraordinary music is genuine, have no doubt about that. Now, anything as down to earth as this music is very apt to be an acquired taste and the *Alegrias y Penas de Andalucia* will not, it is expected, find a large audience; but it will find an enthusiastic one.

The eight sections here recorded provide an excellent cross section of *Flamenco* music; its despair, simplicity and sensuality. For example, there are *Variations, Fandangos, Bullerías* and *Tarantos*. And there are more specific items such as *Judea, Granada, Noch en Santa Cruz* and *Soleares y Seguriyas*.

Detached as the music is from its accompanying action, it still retains a large share of interest, due largely to its innate vitality that is nothing short of astonishing. Luis Maravilla is an accomplished performer on the guitar and the vocal interjections of Pepe Valencio, while they cannot be judged by any of the ordinary vocal standards, add considerable color and excitement to the performance.

The general flavor of the disc is exotic and stimulating. The music is obviously sincere both as to origin and performance. The moods (and it is music of moods, primarily) range from despair to gaiety, from brisk, cheerful rhythms to laments of a religious nature.

The recording is an epitome of all one has come to expect of Westminster. The clarity and dynamic range is outstanding and very real. Here, certainly, is a record that commands attention, not only from the *aficionados* of Spanish music, but of all those interested in sampling the native music of a country that has an old and conglomerate tradition. W.

An Andrés Segovia Recital. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9633) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Romanesca* (Mudarra). *Prelude*; *Ballet*; *Gigue* (Weiss). *Prelude*; *Gavotte* (Bach). *Allegro* (Sor). *Song Without Words*, Op. 19, No. 6 (Mendelssohn). *Menuetto* (Schubert). *Sonatina* (Torroba). *Leyenda* (Albeniz).

Bach Transcriptions. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-10" disc (MGM-E-123) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Chaconne*; *Prelude*; *Courante*; *Sarabande*; *Bourrée*; *Fugue*.

Segovia fans, of whom there are thousands here in America, will doubtless be glad to learn that these two LP discs are now available. If you are not a Segovia fan, and would like to hear probably the world's outstanding guitarist, here is your opportunity.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Collosum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Hady Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 83 1/2 rpm.
 ♂ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 9

NOVEMBER, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

RECORD COLLECTORS will be glad to learn that Columbia has published its first complete catalog since 1949. This is a much-needed work which has been satisfactorily accomplished.

The 1952/3 Columbia catalog contains 668 pages, and it is completely cross-indexed. It lists each selection by title and by artist, and it also lists classical works by composer. Where an LP record contains several selections, it is listed by the general title of the record and also by each of the selections. One can further find his favorite types of music, such as Operatic, Ballet, Marches, etc., listed under the appropriate category. Needless to say, the catalog lists all speeds at which each selection was recorded.

The regular price of the new Columbia catalog is \$1. However, the publishers of this bulletin have secured a limited quantity at a special pre-publication price of 60c and will be glad to supply them to readers requesting them at this price until 30 November 1952; in ordering by mail, please add 25c to cover postage and handling.

* * *

Our attention has recently been called to a new record cleaning cloth known as the Duotone "Electro-Wipe." This 11" x 11" cloth has been treated chemically so that by wiping a record parallel to the grooves one can remove all dust and grit and leave the record so that dust will not cling to it. No water or other liquid should be used with this cloth; the chemical contained in it is sufficient.

Each cloth is packed in a pliofilm pouch, and it is suggested that the cloth be kept in the pouch when not being used to help prevent the chemical from drying out. The price of the "Electro-Wipe" cloth is \$1.50; if your local dealer cannot supply them, orders addressed to

the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled. The price includes postage to any point in U. S. A.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these (48 copies) may be had at the special price of \$3 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550.

One side, and **Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian").** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50010) \$5.95.

Most conductors, both in the concert hall and on records, seem to regard the *Symphony No. 40, in G minor* as a vehicle for demonstrating their complete lack of understanding of Mozart. They either race through the piece at break-neck speed or else they alter the tempi all over the place and devise weird phrasings that distort the music out of all proportion. The performance of the *G Minor Symphony* was, of course, Beecham's on Columbia 78 rpm (Set No. 316, now, in all probability, out of print).

This incredible performance of Beecham's and the London Philharmonic Orchestra has not been challenged on records until now. Antal Dorati and the superb Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra have made the only really successful LP version of this symphony. Dorati has one of the sanest approaches to music that can be found among present-day conductors, if the current releases by Mercury are any criterion. The conception of this ineffable music is that of a real musician—the approach is sincere, one that lets the score speak for itself (which it can do most eloquently) and the result is as satisfactory a musical experience as can be found on records.

To come within striking distance of Sir Thomas' superlative performance is a considerable feat, and to come within a whisker of equaling it is almost unbelievable—but hear the recording and be convinced.

Mr. Dorati continues his extraordinarily successful excursions into the standard repertoire with another startling recording and performance, this time of Mendelssohn's delightful *Symphony No. 4, in A minor* ("Italian"). Here, as in the Mozart, the essential musicality of the conductor's approach does wonders with a score that has been abused and often blown up to two or three times life size (for instance, Koussevitzky's recording for RCA Victor). In the present recording the music sounds like the Mendelssohn of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*—that is to say, youthful, gay and thoroughly charming. Again, tempi, phrasing and general *élan* are virtually perfect.

Of Mercury's recording it is not necessary to speak except to note that it is of the same high order as on the previous releases in this series. W.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Eileen Farrell (soprano), Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor), Norman Scott (baritone), the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 7-7" disc in box (#V-WDM-6009) \$8.60. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6009) \$11.44.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Hilde Gueden (soprano), Sieglinde Wagner (contralto), Anton Dermota (tenor), Ludwig Weber (bass), the Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Vienna) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-632/3) \$11.90.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Magda Laszio (soprano), Hildegard Roessel-Majdan (contralto), Petre Munteanu (tenor), Richard Standen (bass), the Vienna Singakademie, and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-208) \$11.90.

The Beethoven *Ninth Symphony* has proved the toughest problem for record companies, for no issue has ever satisfied a majority of buyers except the Weingartner recording of some years ago, which is almost universally regarded as not only the greatest recording, but one of the greatest performances on or off discs. That performance is now on LP (*C-SL-165), although its age is apparent in the repro-

duction, which is naturally not up to today's standards. We would still call it the best of the *Ninth*, including the three new entries, but it carries the definite burden of older reproduction.

Toscanini's new recording has had nationwide fanfare and publicity, and its merits are plenty. For Toscanini fans it will prove a prize package. For Beethoven lovers of the old school, it will be a challenge. Toscanini is, for lack of a better description, "trigger-happy" through much of the music. The first movement is as restless, taut, and explosive as it is possible to be. There are several tympani rolls which sound like thunder claps; jittery, business-like gestures bristle all over. The same thing holds here and there in the final movement, to say nothing of the second movement. By comparison, Kleiber sounds like a smooth, seasoned veteran of great poise. Which method produces a better *Ninth* is truly a question. Then there is Scherchen, who is, if anything, even more vociferous than Toscanini, but without Toscanini's (and the NBC Orchestra's) precision or control. The Vienna State Opera Orchestra is the least finished of the three under consideration; but they do Scherchen's bidding with enthusiasm. Scherchen and Toscanini obviously have one thing in common—each knows he is making a "monumental" recording, and he is out to wring, drive, and squeeze the last ounce of music out of the score. Kleiber is clearly in the business to produce a noble performance of the Beethoven *Ninth*, quite in the tradition, and to set no records or high-water marks while about it.

A choice among these three is further complicated by the matter of soloists and choruses. The soloists with Kleiber are easily the best, not only of these recordings, but of any other recordings of this work (Weingartner's were also fine). Fortunately the soloists do not have too much to do with the success of this work, so that will not weigh our decision. The chorus is another matter, and here Toscanini has the best of it. Shaw's Chorale voices the notoriously difficult choral parts with exceptional ability. Part of the success is possibly due to the greater clarity with which they are recorded; Westminster is second in choral clarity, London a bit distant and muddy in parts of the choral sections.

When all the merits are summed up we can come to but one conclusion as far as a recommendation is concerned. If you like a dynamic and high voltage *Ninth*, Toscanini's is going to please you perfectly. If you like a mellow, poised, traditional *Ninth*, Kleiber's will fill your bill. If you are undecided we might suggest that those who will play this work often may find Kleiber's wears better; for a once or twice a year playing, Toscanini's will thrill you more. And if you have time to sample several, by all means include Scherchen and even the old Weingartner set in your schedule—they are well worth consideration.

Finally, a word about the couplings, which for

once we did not allow to influence our decision about the major work. We have never heard Toscanini play the *First* as well as on this disc. It is, as customary with him, rapidly executed; to put it politely; but it has more graceful curves than often appear under his baton. It could well be the best *First* on discs; those who like it done more tenderly will find Bruno Walter's disc to their taste. Scherchen's *First* is good, but it came in second this time. London has no entry for fillers, as their *Ninth* is spread over four sides. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107 ("Reformation"). One and one-half sides, and **Mendelssohn: Legend of the Fair Melusina** (Concert Overture). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-425) \$5.95.

Domestic releases of the *Reformation* Symphony on 78 rpm were but two in number, by Beecham and by Barlow. The LP catalog lists only the present disc and one other which we have not yet heard. The Viennese always play Mendelssohn with a nice style, and the disc at hand is no exception. Felix Prohaska has done some admirable recording of late; his reading of the *Reformation* will bear comparison favorably with previous versions. There is at once a quality which one feels as appropriate. It is good Mendelssohn, with the right touch of dignity for the special material in this work. We just felt good about the whole thing, and were sure Prohaska knew what he was about and had done the job right. The orchestra plays well (more accurately than they sometimes do) and the reproduction is very bright but always sweet.

Mendelssohn's "Reformation" Symphony is, chronologically, the third of his symphonies, being followed by the "Italian" in 1833 and the "Scotch" in 1842. The *Reformation* was composed expressly for the festival in Leipzig on June 25, 1830, commemorating the Tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession which formulated the Lutheran Creed. Germany in that year was seething with political unrest and the performance never came off because of riotous opposition to the festival. A second attempt for a Paris premiere was scuttled by the musicians of the Conservatory Orchestra. Mendelssohn, himself, finally premiered it in Berlin later in 1832; it got a lukewarm reception, and was not published during the composer's lifetime. Today many of us find it a pleasant diversion, with its quotations of the Dresden Amen and the hymn *Ein feste Burg*.

The *Fair Melusina* overture makes one of its extremely rare appearances on discs with a fine performance under Prohaska. This overture was one of Mendelssohn's prime favorites. It is typical music of this master, graceful, light, and descriptive of the subject matter. You will quickly recognize the composer of *Fingal's Cave* and even *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It provides a perfect filler for the second side of the symphony disc. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4544) \$5.45.

Another recording of the *Pathétique* Symphony would hardly be a welcome item or a likely subject for much of a review unless it were something exceptional. This one is definitely exceptional. It is, first of all, Columbia's latest and finest effort at high fidelity reproduction. They are second to no other company in quality of recorded orchestral sound with this disc. The clarity of the orchestra is particularly notable; there is a fair perspective, no blurring, and the quality and timbre of instruments and of groups is faithful. What you hear is truly magnificent—and it sounds good on the general run of record players as well as high fidelity equipment. It is difficult to imagine better reproduction.

Columbia could find no better "demonstrator" in the world today for their new recording technique than the Philadelphia Orchestra. After hearing many recordings for many years of the familiar masterworks—the Tchaikovsky symphonies, Brahms symphonies, Scheherazade, and other romantic and well worn works—there is just one firm conclusion that is arrived at easily: no orchestra exceeds the Philadelphians for eloquence. For sheer beauty of tone, quality of first desk men, and precision of ensemble, the Philadelphians are tops. They are better on an off day than most other orchestras at the top of their form.

A glance at the list of other recordings of the *Pathétique* shows little competition for this disc. Rodzinski's was good, but the reproduction is now outmoded; Münch's London disc is good, but the orchestra is not up to Philadelphia; Toscanini is no Tchaikovsky conductor; and so on. So if you want a *Pathétique*, this is it. We do not think Ormandy's reading eclipses the old Furtwängler 78 rpm job for subtlety or nuance, but Ormandy holds his own in every other respect—except that he borrows a little of Toscanini's ideas of the third movement. That is, however, a prevalent way of conducting it these days; and it has a thrilling effect. So we are pleased to give this our highest gold medal award and recommend it unconditionally. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4596) \$5.45.

With this disc Bruno Walter completes his recordings of all nine Beethoven symphonies. Walter is considered one of the great Beethoven interpreters of all time, although that opinion is not shared by everyone. Another distinction this disc can claim is that it is the longest LP record offered to date; it contains over sixty-four minutes of music. It is quite an engineering feat, for the quality remains excep-

tionally good throughout. It also proves some of the remarks made in these columns during the past year or so about the amount of music offered on certain 10" and 12" discs.

While the *Second* and the *Fourth* are the least popular of the Beethoven symphonies, they are nevertheless superb masterpieces, and they make a perfect coupling for this disc. The *Second* is the sunniest and most relaxed of the Beethoven symphonies; if not as light as the *First* it is even more radiant. Walter brings a warmth and glow to this music that is altogether fitting. He does a good job with the *Fourth*, which is also endowed with gentleness and tranquil beauty, and benefits from the humanity of a conductor like Walter. Even some of those who object to Walter's liberties with tempo in Beethoven must admit that a "plastic" touch in these two enhances the effect. Walter always conducts in the grand manner and his Beethoven has a unique charm and dignity and an undeniable understanding. It is not Prussian drillmaster, nor Italianate Beethoven; it is Beethoven with a heart.

Bruno Walter is to be congratulated on completing this fine cycle, and Columbia is to be congratulated for offering the complete set by him, as well as the complete reissue series of Weingartner recordings. The present disc is, of course, a best buy as far as your money's worth is concerned, and we would highly recommend it artistically and technically too, for no other conductor brings more beauty to this music than Walter. S.

Mozart: Serenade No. 9 in D, K. 320 ("Posthorn"). L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Peter Maag. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-502) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade No. 10 in B-flat, K. 361. Wind Instrument Group of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7470) \$5.95.

Up until Mozart left Salzburg, the terms *serenade*, *cassation* and *divertimento* appeared very frequently in the lists of his works. After moving to Vienna, this type of composition was abandoned in favor of the symphony. The change is understandable in view of the differences in the two societies.

The *Serenades* were written, as a rule, for festive occasions (birthdays, weddings and the like) and were usually performed out of doors. Some of the works were written "by the yard" but, sometimes, Mozart would suddenly become interested in what he was doing, and a major work would result. Such a work is the *Serenade No. 9, in D major*, better known as the "Posthorn Serenade." This is an ambitious composition, almost symphonic in nature, in seven movements. Large orchestral forces are employed (unusual in a work of this type) and a catalog of its delights would take more space than is available. The Suisse Romande Orchestra under Peter Maag plays with precision and style and they have been afforded superb recording. The disc is

both delightful to hear and absorbing on repetition. A previous recording by the Haydn Society is outclassed on all counts.

The *Serenade No. 10, in B Flat Major* is not of such high musical stature. The combination of thirteen wind instruments, even by the incomparable Mozart, tends to become monotonous. The work is cast in the *Divertimento* mold by this scoring and, while Mozart explores all the combinations as only he could, one comes away with the impression that it is more fun to play than to hear. The wind instrument group of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra plays well, but one has heard better quality in our own orchestras. This may be due, in part, to the somewhat harsh, unsympathetic recording. Of the two previous recordings of this work it can be noted that technically the Victor, (Koussevitzky and the Boston Orchestra), sounds better but lacks the style necessary to successful Mozart. The other, also on Vox, was not available for comparison. W.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5, Op. 47. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7610) \$5.95.

When Columbia released a recording of the Shostakovich *Fifth* by Rodzinski about ten years ago, we were enthusiastic about it and found it preferable to the Stokowski recording. Stokowski had a wonderful way of interpreting this work, very much on the reflective side; but Rodzinski had a strong, sharp reading that contained more excitement. Who was right is still debatable. The present reading is somewhat between these two other performances but more like Rodzinski's than Stokowski's. Jascha Horenstein is a brilliant conductor with an enviable record for first phonographic editions of Bruckner, Mahler, Schönberg, and others and is highly regarded as a conductor in many parts of the world. We recall an early electric Polydor set of the Bruckner *Seventh Symphony* which he made and which was a joy in those days. We wish he had at his disposal for the present recording the old Berlin Philharmonic, or one of today's crack ensembles. The Vienna Symphony has made countless recordings in the past few years, and many have been fine; but they are not in every instance the razor-edged group with the unlimited power necessary for a work like this. This disc gives us the feeling we often get these days—when they finished playing the symphony, they should have gone back and re-recorded the first movement. After they get warmed up they are pretty good. For orchestral excellence and conductorial skill, Rodzinski is still preferable in our opinion (*C-ML-4042). If the reproduction of the Columbia disc is not up to today's standard on your phonograph, the present Horenstein disc should fill the bill nicely.

We welcome this recording of the *Fifth* because recordings of the Shostakovich symphonies are not as plentiful as the works merit. This symphony is

one of the great works of our day and is worthy of frequent performances, as well as adequate recordings. We recommend the work to any lovers of symphonies beyond the time of Brahms. S.

Reger: Serenade for Orchestra, Op. 95. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7052) \$5.95.

Pfitzner: Das Käthchen von Heilbronn, Op. 17—Overture. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Pfitzner. And **Pfitzner: Das Christelflein, Op. 20—**Overture. Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Reger: Ballet Suite, Op. 130.** Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernst Schrader. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7050) \$5.95.

Pfitzner: Kleine Sinfonie, Op. 44. Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Herman Abendroth. One side, and **Pfitzner: Symphony in C, Op. 46.** Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7044) \$5.95.

One thing these three discs have in common, they are all well played and well recorded. Each of the six selections is played by a different orchestra, and in each case the orchestra plays well and with enthusiasm and conviction. The Berlin Philharmonic does an outstandingly fine job with the Reger *Serenade*, an extremely romantic affair, which is played for the type of music it is. Jochum had made a recording of this work previously with the Amsterdam Orchestra for Telefunken, which Capitol has made available on LP in this country; however, the present disc has the advantage of better reproduction, and can be preferred on that point alone. The *Serenade* is a symphonic piece written for two orchestral groups, the second one with muted instruments giving the effect of an echo. Love and Longing are the basic elements of the work, and it contains a most fervent slow movement of great expression.

Reger's *Ballet Suite* is a well contrasted and colorful score which packs more interest than nearly anything else we know of this composer. Its six short sections include a *Valse d'Amour* which is reminiscent of Vienna and Johann Strauss. Anyone can enjoy this suite immediately; it is played with great spirit by the Dresden Orchestra under Schrader. The overtures to two of Pfitzner's operas did not appeal to us very much. The one conducted by the composer (see heading) must have been recorded several years ago, as Pfitzner died in 1949. Pfitzner is listed as having made a record for Polydor of the *Das Christelflein* overture with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra; but he is not listed in the "World's Encyclopaedia" as having recorded the *Käthchen* overture. Also the reproduction of the *Christelflein* has not the ring that any of these other Urania selections has. Something seems funny about this pair of Pfitzner pieces, and when times permits we will dig into it.

Both of Pfitzner's symphonies are rather short and played as one movement, although they are in distinct sections. It is music in the language of Schumann and Wagner, without their originality. Pfitzner fanned the flames of German Romanticism, and his music will be a joy to those who crave this style. Both works are superbly played and resoundingly reproduced. S.

Bartók: Suite No. 1 for Orchestra, Op. 3. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*COLOSSEUM CLPS-1010) \$5.95.

This Suite, which dates from 1905, is the last work of importance to show the influence of Richard Strauss, Wagner, Brahms and Liszt. From this point on Bartók was himself alone, and his originality came forth that made him one of the most profound and unique composers of our present generation.

The present work is of real importance because it gives us an idea of Bartók's early music—music which, by the way, is very much easier to appreciate than that which was to follow. Most anyone may enjoy this orchestral suite with its rich Hungarian tang. On the present LP disc it has been performed with fine spirit by a capable orchestra under a distinguished European conductor. The reproduction, while not of the best, is satisfactory.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-7" discs in box (8V-WDM-9020) \$2.83. One side, and **Gershwin: An American in Paris.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9020) \$5.72.

Now four top-rank conductors have recorded Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony on LP; Koussevitzky, Münch, Ormandy and Toscanini. Of the four we would say that Toscanini with his meticulous attention to detail has made it sound the most "classical." At his hands it is certainly in the spirit of Haydn or Mozart. . . . As for Toscanini's version of Gershwin's *An American in Paris* it is among at least ten versions now available on LP—some very good and some not so good. We are still very fond of the very old recording by the composer with the White-man Orchestra; next to that we would prefer Bernstein's version with the RCA Victor Symphony and closely following we would place the present Toscanini recording. This is purely a personal choice—better make your own comparison.

Music by Strauss. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-7" discs in box (8C-A-1031) \$6.25. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4589) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *One Night in Venice—*Overture; *Acceleration Waltz*, Op. 234; *Wine, Women and Song*, Op. 333; *Perpetual Motion*, Op. 257; *Emperor Waltz*, Op. 439 (J. Strauss, Jr.). *Feuerfest Polka*, Op. 269 ("Fireworks") (Josef Strauss). *Bahn Frei*, Op. 45 ("Galop") (Eduard Strauss).

Among the conductors in this country, Ormandy

is tops in such gay music as this LP disc contains, and with the Philadelphia Orchestra at his command he produces recordings that cannot be beaten in their field. If you are downhearted or depressed and need a lift, put this one on your phonograph; if it doesn't help, you had better call a doctor pronto.

Movie Time. Morton Gould (piano) conducting his orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (♭C-A-1028) \$5.10. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4595) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Easy to Love; I Dream Too Much; They Can't Take That Away from Me; The Piccolino; Long Ago and Far Away; Let's Face the Music and Dance; It Might as Well Be Spring; In the Still of the Night.*

Morton Gould fans will be glad to know of this new group of his arrangements of song hits from the outstanding musical movies of the last several years—good for listening and excellent for music at the cocktail hour or dinner.

Stardust. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4597) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Autumn in New York; The Boy Next Door; Love; I'll Remember April; One Morning in May; Wait Till You See Her; Intermezzo; These Foolish Things; Stardust.*

Lush dinner music by the master with superb reproduction. We predict that Santa won't have enough of these discs to go 'round.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty—Waltz.** And **Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55—Valse Mélancolique.** And **Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C, Op. 48—Waltz.** And **Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite No. 2, Op. 71—Valse finale.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4536) \$5.45.

In addition to a fine performance of the *Romeo and Juliet Overture*, Kostelanetz offers a number of shorter Tchaikovsky selections of a melodious character on this attractive LP disc. Reproduction—excellent.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5143) \$5.95.

This version of the wonderful *Fourth* comes hard on the heels of three other mighty fine LP recordings of the same work. Our favorite to date has been the Novães-Klemperer performance (*VX-PL-7090), with Backhaus-Krauss and Rubinstein-Beecham LP's running very close. Giesecking and von Karajan issued one recently for Columbia (*C-ML-4535), which, while it did not get a full review in these pages, is nevertheless a beautiful piece of

work. We find some folks prefer either the Giesecking or the Backhaus performances. Others in the list—there are eight LP's in all of this work—do not seem to rate among the preferred versions. Where this new one by Badura-Skoda will fit into the picture remains to be seen. As far as reproduction is concerned, it is as good as any of them, better than most, as Westminster's usually are. For a performance we found it generally good. Badura-Skoda has not quite the agile technique of Novães, with whom we were particularly comparing the discs. In many places the similarity of approach was striking; Badura-Skoda is a bit lacking in authority and maturity of style. The choice of a Beethoven *Fourth Concerto* is no easy matter, and we cannot honestly claim one to be far better than the others. There are at least five good sets (those we have discussed) which you should sample before deciding. If you cannot do that, pick your favorite artist or record label and you will have a good record.

The keynote of this concerto is restraint, for it is conceived along lines quite different from the usual concerto. The very opening passages demonstrate the often quiet manner which this music will pursue. It is laden with poetry, yet it remains a concerto which contains the brilliant and thrilling moments expected of this form. It is one of the most satisfying piano concertos in existence, and a formidable challenge to any artist. S.

Busoni: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 35a. Siegfried Borres (violin) with the Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Wolf-Ferrari: Serenade in E-flat for String Orchestra.** Radio Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Matthieu Lange. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7043) \$5.95.

Casualties among composer-performers are rather high and the sad fate of Ferruccio Busoni is typical of the lot that befalls the virtuoso who wishes to be remembered as a composer. In truth, it must be stated that many of his prototypes had little or nothing on which to base their claims, but Busoni, as time might possibly show, was a composer of genius as well as a formidable pianist.

The Violin Concerto dates from 1896-98, and is his first major work to be recorded on LP. (There is a *Sonata* for violin and piano also recorded). This work, like those of Sibelius and Prokofiev, strikes a happy medium between virtuosity and musical value. It is written in one continuous movement and, like the man, is intellectual—a little "stand-offish" but improves tremendously on acquaintance. It is not an overly dissonant work, in fact it is melodic, but it does require close attention on the part of the listener. One might mention in this connection that the effort expended is well rewarded. Prof. Borres plays the piece impeccably, with deceptive ease and classic tonal quality. Arthur Rother and the Radio Berlin Orchestra support the soloist

with enthusiasm and meticulous attention to detail. The music, it cannot be too strongly urged, is worth investigation by all interested in serious music—it is, in fact, almost great music.

An incongruous coupling is furnished in the pleasing, but almost inconsequential (by comparison) *Serenade for String Orchestra* by the youthful Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari. The work was written in 1895 when the composer was nineteen years old. It is a cheerful piece, tuneful, energetic and vivacious. Its chief charm lies in the song-like theme that forms the basis for an altogether delightful set of variations. Matthieu Lange directs the string section of the Radio Berlin Orchestra in smooth fashion.

Recording is good in the Busoni but edgy in the Wolf-Ferrari. Competent notes for both works are supplied by Paul Affelder. W.

Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in D, K. 217a. Aida Stucki (violin) with the Ton-studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. One side, and **Mozart: Rondo in C, K. 373** and **Mozart: Adagio in E, K. 261** and **Mozart: Rondo in B-flat, K. 269.** Gustav Swärdström (violin) with the Ton-studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-548) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto in C, K. 299. Karl Friedrich Mess (flute) and Dora Wagner (harp) with the Ton-studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in D, K. 412.** Gerhard Goermer (horn) with the Ton-studio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-544) \$5.95.

These two LP discs contain a wealth of Mozart music all of which is new to the catalogs except the *Concerto No. 7 in D, K. 217a*. There is another recording of this work on Remington but it is very much inferior to the present version.

The space available does not permit our going into detail regarding the several compositions on these discs but as adequate notes will be found on the jackets those interested may turn to them for the information they desire. We can state that the artists and orchestra are of high calibre and that the recordings have been very successfully accomplished.

Liszt: Concerto No. 2 in A. One side, and **Weber: Konzertstück in F minor, Op. 79.** Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4588) \$5.45.

As an artist of good taste, no one denies Casadesus top billing. He is never guilty of overplaying anything, and occasionally some folks think he doesn't drive enough out of the music. Liszt's concertos can stand a pretty hard driving and usually get it. Casadesus has hit an admirable stride in this music; he brings his accustomed clarity and impeccable technique to this work with a surprising

amount of dash and splash. It results in a performance that is meticulous without being dry. Szell is the perfect accompanist for this occasion; he has a knack for precision and clarity that complement Casadesus' performance. The other existing version on LP is also a Columbia, by Malcuzyński, and it is a fine reading; however, the reproduction is easily outclassed by the newer Casadesus. The *Second Concerto* was many years in the "making," being sketched in 1839, completed ten years later, further revised, and finally published in 1863. It stands as a very lyric, melodious work of one movement, built principally on one theme.

Weber's *Konzertstück* was previously recorded for Columbia by Robert Casadesus many years ago. His re-make is welcome, for many thought his old set the best. There has been but one entry since the original Casadesus that gives it any competition: Westermeier with the Bavarian Orchestra under Rosbaud (*ME-MG-10048), a very fine performance. Now with the new Casadesus, there are two good ones, and the choice can be based on two things. First, reproduction; and Casadesus has the edge here clearly. Second, coupling; and there it is the purchaser's choice. Westermeier's disc has an orchestral coupling of the Weber *Preciosa* and *Euryanthe Overtures*. Since the *Konzertstück* is a showpiece for technical display, it is a good coupling for the Liszt *Concerto*, and we would give the Casadesus disc a high recommendation from every standpoint. S.

Bach: Concerto No. 1 in D minor. One side, and **Bach: Concerto No. 5 in F minor.** Lukas Foss (piano) with the Zimble String Sinfonietta. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9601) \$5.85.

These splendid recordings will bring to the attention of music lovers throughout the country one of America's most brilliant young musicians—we say America's because Lukas Foss, although born in Germany, has been a resident of this country for twelve years (nearly half of his life) and is a citizen.

Mr. Foss is certainly a prodigy—a recognized composer at twenty; winner of a Pulitzer Scholarship, a Critics Circle Citation, a Koussevitzky Music Foundation Grant, and the youngest composer to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship. In addition to being a composer Foss has appeared as guest conductor of several important symphony orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, and his ability as a pianist has ample testimony in the recordings on this recently released Decca LP disc. Here we have a young man under thirty who has won acclaim as a composer, a conductor, and a pianist. He is certainly an artist to watch; he should go far, and quickly, in the world of music.

In the present recordings Mr. Foss is supported by an unique musical organization, the Zimble Sinfonietta, a chamber music group founded by Josef Zimble (a cellist with the Boston Symphony) and

made up of some seventeen members, some of whom, at least, we know to be members of that famous orchestra. This fine group of players is well known to Bostonians because of its annual series of concerts in Jordan Hall; the present recordings will give the rest of our country an opportunity to hear a musical organization of which Boston has been justly proud for some years.

CHAMBER MUSIC



The Complete String Quartets of Beethoven (Vol. I—Early Quartets). Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-172) \$17.35.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 1 in F, Op. 18, No. 1*; *Quartet No. 2 in G, Op. 18, No. 2*; *Quartet No. 3 in D, Op. 18, No. 3*; *Quartet No. 4 in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4*; *Quartet No. 5 in A, Op. 18, No. 5*; *Quartet No. 6 in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 6*.

The Complete String Quartets of Beethoven (Vol. II—Middle Quartets). Budapest String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album (*C-SL-173) \$22.59.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 7 in F, Op. 59, No. 1* ("Rasoumovsky No. 1"); *Quartet No. 8 in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2* ("Rasoumovsky No. 2"); *Quartet No. 9 in C, Op. 59, No. 3* ("Rasoumovsky No. 3"); *Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Op. 74* ("Harp"); *Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95* ("Serioso").

The Complete String Quartets of Beethoven (Vol. III—Late Quartets). Budapest String Quartet. 5-12" discs in album (*C-SL-174) \$27.83.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 12 in E-flat, Op. 127*; *Quartet No. 13 in B-flat, Op. 130*; *Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131*; *Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132* ("Heiliger Dankesang"); *Quartet No. 16 in F, Op. 135*; *Grosse Fuge, Op. 133*.

Columbia has accomplished a project of supreme importance in the realm of chamber music. Under its auspices, the Budapest String Quartet (Joseph Raismann, first violin; Jac Gorodetzky, second violin; Boris Kroyt, viola; Mischa Schneider, violoncello) has recorded the sixteen Beethoven String Quartets plus the *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133. These recordings were made in the Coolidge Auditorium of The Library of Congress and the famous Stradivari instruments of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Foundation were used. Thus we have a recording of superlatives. Certainly Beethoven's series of string quartets stands number one in all music in that field—the Budapest String Quartet probably has no peer in the musical world of today—connoisseurs pretty generally agree that the Whittall instruments as a group cannot be equalled anywhere—the Coolidge Auditorium is very nearly perfect acoustically.

All that it would seem that a lover of chamber music needs is the money to buy these recordings and that has been made a reasonably easy matter because they have been issued in three volumes, which may be purchased one at a time.

Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 50, No. 1. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in C, Op. 50, No. 2.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-22) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 50, No. 3. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in F-sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 4.** Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (HS-HSQ-23) \$5.95.

Haydn: Quartet in F, Op. 50, No. 5 ("The Dream"). One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 50, No. 6** ("The Frog"). Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-24) \$5.95.

The Haydn Society continues with its prodigious task of recording all of the Haydn string quartets. The first sixteen were mentioned in our September 1952 issue, and with the six of Opus 50 listed above there are now twenty-two available. All have been recorded by the Schneider Quartet; and as the new releases are well up to the standard of the earlier recordings that were so widely praised by the critics, it seems only necessary to make known that they are now available.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano). 4-7" discs in box (8V-WDM-1612) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1193) \$5.72.

It would seem to us that Heifetz and Moiseiwitsch were just in the proper mood when they went into the studio to record Beethoven's great "Kreutzer" Sonata, for the present recording indicates to us a truly inspired performance. There are other fine versions by Busch and Serkin, and Franciscatti and Casadesu, but for our money we will take the record listed above.

Beethoven: Serenade in D, Op. 25. Julius Baker (flute); Joseph Fuchs (violin); Lillian Fuchs (viola). One side, and **Beethoven: Trio in C minor, Op. 9, No. 3.** Joseph Fuchs (violin); Lillian Fuchs (viola); Harry Fuchs (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9574) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Trio in B-flat, Op. 11. Reginald Kell (clarinet); Lillian Fuchs (viola); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). One side, and **Mozart: Trio in E-flat, K. 498.** Reginald Kell (clarinet); Frank Miller (violoncello); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9543) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133. One side, and **Bach: Fugue in A minor and Bach: Fugue in G minor and Bach: Das musikalische Opfer—Ricercare** in six parts. Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-526) \$5.95.

All of the chamber music on these LP discs is presently available in recorded form except the orchestral arrangements of the two Bach Fugues to be found on the London record (*L-LL-526). In view of this fact and also because of the vast num-

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
♯ indicates 45 rpm.

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ber of chamber music records that we are receiving for review each month, we must be content with simply listing them and stating that the performances and the recordings are quite satisfactory.

CHORAL



Haydn: Mass in E-flat ("Grosse Orgelmesse"). Elisabeth Roon (soprano); Hilde Rösel-Majdan (alto); Waldemar Kmentt (tenor); Walter Berry (bass); The Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann, with Bruno Seidlhofer (organ). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7020) \$5.95.

The supply of previously unrecorded Haydn is apparently inexhaustible. This work, an early one dating from 1766 is the second of the twelve in this form that are extant. It is also the first actual *Missa Solemnis*, for its predecessor is a *missa brevis*. The full and proper title of the work under consideration is *Missa in Honorem Beatissimae Virginis Mariae* and it is scored for four soloists, chorus and an orchestra consisting of two horns, two *cors anglais*, two violins, organ and bass. Two trumpets and tympani, used in this recording, were added later by Haydn.

Musically, the Mass is delightful (if one can use such a term about a serious religious composition) and, although lacking the seriousness of the later Masses, is still a real tribute to the Creator, as it was intended to be. Mendelssohn, we are told, found it "scandalously gay," a criticism that one finds difficult to understand. Rather the music has a plaintive sound, a contemplative quality unusual in the ordinarily extrovert Haydn.

The soloists are all good singers and with the exception of the soprano, Elisabeth Roon, well known to record collectors. Miss Roon has a lyric soprano that, while not a great one, is certainly appealing. The work of the Vienna Symphony and the Akademie Kammerchor is also favorably known via recordings in this country and it suffices to say that they maintain the high standards set previously. Herr Grossmann directs with understanding and appropriate style which is all the music requires.

This disc is commendable on several counts. It is another step towards having all the Haydn Masses recorded; it is an excellent introduction to Haydn's work in this form and, lastly, it is a beautiful piece of music, *per se*.

Good recording, texts and above average notes also contribute to the listener's pleasure. W.

Christmas Hymns and Carols (Vol. II). Robert Shaw Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 6-12" discs in album (V-DM-1711) \$8.89. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1711) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1711) \$5.72.

Six years ago Robert Shaw brought out his first volume of Christmas Hymns and Carols; and since that time, as each Christmastide comes around, more

and more copies of it are sold. It is probably the most popular Christmas item in the whole record repertory. And now this year Mr. Shaw offers his second volume. It very likely will not be so popular as the first one because the earlier one contained most of the better known carols. However, the present group contains twenty-six carols (we did not notice any selections that we would call hymns) from various countries, the majority of which will be new to most persons; thus the second volume has the advantage of having something unusual in the field of Christmas music. Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Colonial America are represented. We found many of them thoroughly delightful, and the simplicity of the arrangements are highly appropriate. All of them are sung *a capella*, which happily precludes obtrusive accompaniments. We have nothing but praise for Mr. Shaw's second volume of Christmas Carols.

OPERA



Verdi: Il Trovatore (complete). (Sung in Italian). Zinka Milanov (soprano); Fedora Barbieri, Margaret Roggero (mezzo-sopranos); Jussi Björling (tenor); Leonard Warren, George Cehanovsky (baritones); Nicola Moscona (basso); Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw; and RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-6008) \$10.90. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6008) \$11.44.

For the third issue in its series of new opera recordings, RCA Victor has recorded a well-nigh perfect performance of Verdi's immortal *Il Trovatore*. This venerable war horse, first produced in 1853, has had countless productions throughout the world, yet a reasonably good performance never fails to thrill; and when one hears four really good singers with a strong supporting cast, the result is heady in the extreme.

One is chary of invoking the shade of Rosa Ponselle; yet that was the first name that came to mind on hearing Zinka Milanov's Leonora. Then too, this reviewer came to this present recording just after hearing Cetra's *Don Carlo*; the difference between Caniglia and Milanov was startling. It is not fair, perhaps, to make such comparisons; for Mme. Caniglia, a superb artist in her own right, is no longer in her prime, vocally, while Mme. Milanov is at the height of her powers. In all events, one would be hard put to imagine a better Leonora. Jussi Björling surprises as Manrico—for almost the first time on records he seems to unbend and get caught up in the spirit of his role, and the result is a superior performance. Fedora Barbieri turns in an Azucena that has spirit, life and color. She is, of course, an accomplished artist, and her characterization is skilled and competent. Di Luna, in the person of the redoubtable Leonard Warren, is sonorous and

surprisingly suave. Among the others, one must mention Nicola Moscona, who sings an uncommonly fine Ferrando.

One can not give enough praise, however, to conductor Renato Cellini, who takes this cast, with its United Nations flavor (a Yugoslav, a Swede, an Italian, an American and a Greek), combines all the dissimilar national backgrounds and comes up with a decidedly and properly Italianate performance. The rapport between singers, chorus and orchestra is extraordinarily good; Cellini's choice of a relaxed and even tempo is a happy one, for there is enough excitement and general tizzy in the music.

Previous issues of *Il Trovatore* (there are two: Cetra's, and Columbia's re-issue of an early 78 rpm version) are outclassed on all counts. RCA Victor has given the buyer, in addition to superior recorded sound (New Orthophonic, no less) an illustrated brochure that contains, besides the libretto, a very personal and informative essay on the opera by Vincent Sheehan. W.

Puccini: La Bohème (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese, Patrice Munsel (sopranos); Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor); Leonard Warren, George Cehanovsky (baritones); Nicola Moscona (basso); RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini and Victor Trucco. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1709) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1709) \$5.72.

The practice of issuing selections from an opera, now that LP records are firmly established, is one that, if not abused, can be profitable both artistically and economically. The first of these conditions cannot be met by all operas, but *La Bohème* lends itself very easily to such treatment. Thus, on one disc, one has *Che gelida manina*; *Mi chiamano Mimi*; *O soave fanciulla*; *Quando m'en vo soletta*; *Donde lieta usci*; *Addio dolce svegliare*; *Ah, Mimi tu più non torni*; and the entire finale (with the exception of the "Old Coat" song) beginning with the words *Sono andati*? From this it can be seen that only two items of real importance have been excised—the short aria for Rodolfo in Act III (*Mimi è una civetta*) and *Vecchia zimara*, noted above.

The singers gathered for this recording represent some of the finest available. Giuseppe di Stefano is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the finest lyric tenor singing today. His voice can best be described as a combination of Gigli and Martinelli—he has the sweetness and *bel canto* abilities of the former and the manliness and musicianship of the latter. This is, one readily admits, fulsome praise for a young tenor (di Stefano is in his early thirties), but his few HMV discs and the Sicilian Songs made in this country amply attest to his great gifts. On this record he contributes one of the best, if not the very best *Che gelida manina* yet recorded; and in the duet (*O soave fanciulla*) he is almost unbelievable. His phrasing and choice of *tempi*, the latter usually on the slow side, are always in good taste.

In addition, he has the ability to inspire other singers to sing very well or even far beyond their usual efforts.

Mme. Albanese is well known to record collectors, and she has never sounded better than on this disc. Vocally, her Mimi is reminiscent of Bori's, which is high praise indeed. Leonard Warren and Patrice Munsel are more than adequate as Marcello and Musetta. Nicola Moscona and George Cehanovsky sing the lines of Colline and Schaunard in the finale.

The disc is well recorded and is attractively arranged with bands separating the various excerpts. The chief glory, however, is the magic of di Stefano's beautiful tenor. This is a five star must for all opera lovers, though they may have *La Bohème* in several versions. W.

Verdi: Don Carlo (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia, Graziella Sciutti (sopranos); Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano); Mirto Picchi, Manfredi Ponz de Leon (tenors); Paolo Silveri (baritone); Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, Giulio Neri, Albino Gaggi (bassos); Orchestra and Chorus of the Radio Italiana (Rome) conducted by Fernando Previtali. 4-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1234) \$23.80.

Cetra adds the magnificent *Don Carlo* to its long list of recorded Verdi operas in what is, by and large, a successful performance. This work, like several others of Verdi's, was subjected to revision (*Simon Boccanegra* and *Macbeth* are two others that come to mind in this connection) and what is lost in spontaneity is gained in coherence. *Don Carlo* is based on Schiller's play of the same name and contains some of Verdi's greatest music. The first act duet; the scene with the Grand Inquisitor; Eboli's *O don fatale*; Philip's great soliloquy; and Elisabeth's last act aria, *Tu che le vanita*, are among the greatest in all opera.

A strong and potentially excellent cast, headed by Caniglia, Stignani and Silveri, deals eloquently with the dramatic music. Maria Caniglia is one of Italy's better dramatic sopranos and, barring certain mannerisms, turns in a good performance. Her singing of *Tu che le vanita* is very personal and, while it lacks the sweep of Margherita Grandi's wonderful recording (now, unfortunately, a cut-out HMV disc) is still acceptable. Ebe Stignani disappoints as Princess Eboli. She becomes very bumptious in this role for some obscure reason, and her singing of the delicate *Canzone del Velo* would be more appropriate for *Stride la vampa*. Her second aria, *O don fatale*, fares better because the sentiment can stand the rough treatment. Silveri is a more than passable Rodrigo and he sings with fervor and spirit. King Philip, in the person of Rossi-Lemeni, receives a reasonably good characterization, but one can not get over the feeling that this young Italian basso has been pushed along too fast—he lacks polish and subtlety, two necessary requirements for a successful portrayal of the role. Giulio Neri is a superb Inquisitor. He has

a sonorous bass that is imposing and sinister by turn—it is a sterling performance he gives. Mirto Picchi is only an average tenor with little real beauty of voice. He is adequate but in no way distinguished.

Fernando Previtali conducts with his usual distinction and musicianship. The orchestra and chorus have been well trained and their performances are excellent. Cetra has achieved one of its best technical jobs to date. The usual fine notes and libretto are included.

W.

Operatic Recital. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with Erna Berger (soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9010) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9010) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Der Rosenkavalier*—Presentation of the Silver Rose; *Der Rosenkavalier*—Ist ein Traum; *Nozze di Figaro*—No so più cosa son; *Nozze di Figaro*—Voi che sapete; *Orfeo ed Euridice*—Che farò senza Euridice; *Carmen*—C'est toi!

NOTE: *Not contained in 45 rpm version.

The first side of this disc is devoted to two of the better moments from "Der Rosenkavalier," the *Presentation of the Rose* from Act II and *Ist ein Traum* from Act III. In both scenes Risë Stevens is joined by the incomparable Erna Berger (as Sophie) and with Fritz Reiner directing the orchestra the results are very fine indeed.

The other side is a different and, at times, a sadder story. Neither Fritz Reiner nor his soloist show any understanding of Mozart and Cherubino with the result that the performances of *Non so più cosa son* and *Voi che sapete* are neither convincing nor successful. Both arias are hurried, especially the latter, and while they are note perfect, there is a devastating lack of feeling that left this listener cold. The results obtained in the Gluck arias are about on the same artistic level—to the soloist the two arias from *Orfeo* are just so many notes to be produced properly. The finale from *Carmen* loses much of its impact when isolated, as it is here.

RCA's recording is uniformly good but texts are not supplied.

W.

Menotti: Amahl and the Night Visitors (complete). (Sung in English). Chet Allen, Rosemary Kuhlmann, Andrew McKinley, David Aiken, Leon Lishner, and Francis Monachino with orchestra and chorus conducted by Thomas Schippers. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1701) \$5.14. 1-12" disc in box (*V-LM-1701) \$5.72.

One of the highlights of last year's television programs was the telecast, on Christmas Eve, of Gian-Carlo Menotti's little one act opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. The work made a great impression, and this reviewer approached the recorded performance with considerable misgiving. Would the music be able to stand alone with no scenery, no costumes? The answer came very quickly—it could more than hold its own on records.

The cast is the original one; Chet Allen, as Amahl, sings with wonderful purity of tone, excellent diction and perfect expression; altogether it is an amazing performance for so young a child. As his mother, Rosemary Kuhlmann is ideally cast; she handles her fine mezzo in an intelligent manner. The three kings, Andrew McKinley, David Aiken and Leon Lishner, sing well and show a fine regard for the characterization that is so cleverly written into the music.

Amahl and the Night Visitors is a prime example of what can be done, not only with "modern" opera but also with opera in English. The libretto, also the work of Mr. Menotti, is ideal. The story has everything: drama, pathos, humor and action. The tale of the little crippled boy who offers his crutch as a gift for the Christ-child, is set to music that is universal in its appeal. Thomas Schippers, the conductor, directs a well rounded performance.

RCA Victor has gone all-out in packaging this opera and supplies a very tasteful booklet with a note on the genesis of the work by the composer and, of course, a complete libretto. The recording rates with the best yet achieved.

W.

Debussy: Pelléas et Mélisande (complete). (Sung in French). Suzanne Danco, Pierre Mollet, Heinz Rehfuss, André Vessières, Hélène Bouvier, Flore Wend, Derrick Olsen and L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 4-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-11) \$23.80.

"In making an attempt to understand *Pelléas et Mélisande*," writes Ernest Ansermet in his informative notes for this recording, "the starting point should be Debussy himself rather than any notion about musical drama, for, as musical drama, this work is the only one of its kind." This is sound advice and those who have tried to find out what made Debussy "tick," as it were, are rewarded by a much deeper appreciation of his unique masterpiece. It does not necessarily follow, however, that everyone will live this almost pathological story, with its veiled and misty atmosphere.

Vocally and stylistically there can be nothing but praise for the singers. Mlle. Danco is a striking *Mélisande*; she conveys an air of distraction and innocence that is convincing and original. Goloud, "the only human character in the whole opera" (Cooper) is sung by Heinz Rehfuss in impeccable fashion. He gives the impression, as he should, of one who wanders about in a nightmare. *Pelléas* is in the capable hands of Pierre Mollet. He matches *Mélisande* in mood and style and they form as fine a pair of ill-starred lovers as one could imagine. The others in the cast, especially André Vessières as Arkel, are very good.

Chief honors, in all events, go to Ernest Ansermet for a sensitive and musicianly reading of the score. All the shadings and degrees of orchestral color are realized to perfection (a tip of the hat here to London's engineers). Ansermet is, of course, a specialist in this sort of thing; his reputation is definitely

enhanced by the results he achieves.

Comparison is difficult with the Victor issue which was "dubbed" from a wartime recording on 78 rpm discs. That was a good performance but the plush sound on the new London set plus equally good artists, puts the older recording in the shade. London has also come through handsomely with a fine libretto and an attractive package.

W.

VOCAL



Telemann: Pimpinone ("The Unequal Marriage"). (Sung in German). Helen Fuchs (soprano) and Erich Lassner (baritone) with the Salzburg String Quartet and Jonathan Sternberg (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-27) \$5.95.

Gluck: L'Ivrogne Corrigé ("The Reformed Drunkard"). (Sung in French). Soloists with the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-38) \$5.95.

How far off the beaten track of music can one wander and still find scores that have merit? This question, probably unanswerable, is posed, in all events, by the two discs under observation. Both composers are well-known—Telemann as the man who overshadowed Bach in his life-time and Gluck as the first great "reformer" of opera. The two "operas" now recorded, however, will undoubtedly be new to at least 95% of American music lovers.

Telemann's *Pimpinone* is an "Intermezzo" or a "comic opera in three intermezzi" and bears the sub-title *Die ungleiche Heirat* (*The Unequal Marriage*). It is the same farcical situation later used by Pergolesi in his sparkling *La Serva Padrona*. *Pimpinone* had its first performance at Hamburg in 1725 and so antedates Pergolesi's effort by about eight years. Both Helen Fuchs, who sings *Vesperta* the chambermaid, and Erich Lassner as *Pimpinone* the wealthy bachelor, sing well although with little imagination. The music, to be sure, is on the dry side—not notable for humor where lightness of touch is indicated. The work is definitely a museum piece; it will be of interest to students, perhaps, and to collectors of 18th century scores. Deft accompaniments are supplied by the Salzburg Quartet and Jonathan Sternberg (harpsichord). A libretto and good recording are supplied.

Gluck's *L'Ivrogne Corrigé* dates from 1760 and was written as a sort of exercise to help the composer familiarize himself with the use of French in writing for voice. As such an exercise it is undoubtedly very successful; but as work for repeated hearings for the average music lover—that, to be honest, is a very different matter. There is one interesting aria, that of Cleon *Avec nous il prit naissance* that later grew into the wonderful *J'ai perdu mon Eurydice* from "Orpheus." The work is sung in exemplary fashion by a fine group of soloists including Claudine Collart, Bernhard Demigny, Jean Hoff-

mann and others. René Leibowitz conducts the Paris Philharmonic gracefully and paces the performance excellently. A libretto is furnished with an English translation that is in very poor taste. Good recording.

W.

Paul Schoeffler Sings. Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone) with the Austria State Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Loibner (in the operatic selections) and accompanied by Otto Schulhof (piano) (in the *lieder*). 1-12" disc (*MASTERSEAL MW-43) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*—Verachtet mir die Meister nicht; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*—Was duftet doch der Flieder; *Tannhäuser*—Blick' ich umher; *Tannhäuser*—O du mein holder Abendstern (Wagner). *Der Musensohn*; *Der Doppelgänger*; *Die Stadt* (Schubert). *Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur*; *Ich liebe dich* (Beethoven). *Tom der Reimer*; *Die Lotusblume* (Loewe).

The distinguished bass-baritone, Paul Schoeffler, is presented here by Masterseal in a collection of Wagnerian excerpts and a series of *lieder*. Herr Schoeffler's many talents are well known and all are in evidence on this record. In the two *Meistersinger* excerpts his by now quite well known characterization of the philosophical cobbler is the same dignified and human one it was in the complete set issued by London. As Wolfram, he also finds a congenial role and sings the music of *Blick' ich umher* and the favorite *O du mein holder Abendstern* with feeling and regard for the text. The other side contains seven assorted songs, three by Schubert, two by Beethoven and one each by Loewe and Schumann. The Schubert are, of course, wonderful music, but the soloist seems a bit uneasy in all but *Die Stadt*. The Beethoven items are more to his liking and come off very well. A fine performance of the wonderful *Tom der Reimer* (Loewe) and a well-phrased *Die Lotusblume* complete the disc.

W.

Haydn: Arianna a Naxos. One side, and **Haydn:**

(6) **English Canzonettas.** Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Ralph Kirkpatrick (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2051) \$5.95.

This relatively obscure *Cantata* and the group of songs or *canzonettas* were written by Haydn for his English audiences. The *Cantata*, an ambitious work, dates from about the year 1789 but was reserved for his first English concert on 18 February 1791. It was, we are informed, a rousing success (as well it might be) even though it was sung by Signor Pacchieratti, a male soprano. Later performances by Nancy Storace were even more successful. Despite the Italian text, *Arianna a Naxos* is not Italianate in character, following rather the ideas of Gluck on dramatic music. One eminent Italian composer, Giovanni Paisiello, took an exceedingly dim view of the piece, describing it succinctly as a "*porcheria tedesca*" (a German mess).

The songs, six in number, are of varying interest. The first three are nothing short of superb—*The Mermaid's Song*, *She never told her love* and *The Spirit's Song*. The other three, *Fidelity*, *A Pastoral Song* ("My Mother bids me bind my hair") and *The Sailor's Song*, while good, are not on the same high level of artistic excellence as the previous three.

Mme. Tourel sings throughout in a warm, vibrant mezzo that is as easy to listen to as it is appropriate to the music. She is one of the few singers around today who seems to enjoy her work and thus adds an indefinable quality to her performances that raises them above the routine. In the long and at times taxing *Arianna a Naxos*, interest never flags due to the expressiveness and animation with which it is sung.

Accompaniments for Miss Tourel are supplied by Ralph Kirkpatrick on a piano that is a recreation of an 18th Century instrument designed and built by John Chalis. It sounds like a harpsichord in the treble and like a modern piano in the bass. It is at once curious and fascinating. Informative notes, complete texts and excellent recording are added features.

French Canadian Folk Songs. Alan Mills (vocal) with guitar accompaniment. 1-10" disc (*FOLKWAYS FP-29) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *Vive la Canadienne*; *M'en allant à la chasse*; *Les Raftsmen*; *Youpe! Youpe! Sur la rivière!*; *Je sais bien quelque chose*; *Monsieur le cure*; *Un Canadien errant*; *A la claire fontaine*; *Isabeau s'y promene*; *C'est l'aviron*; *C'est la belle Françoise*; *Si mon moine voulait danser!*; *Mon père y m'a marié*.

The Unquiet Grave. Andrew Roman Summers (vocal) with dulcimer accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*FOLKWAYS FP-64) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Unquiet Grave*; *Searching for Lambs*; *Pretty Sally*; *The True Lover's Farewell*; *The Cruel Brother*; *Geordie*; *At the Foot of Yonders Mountain*; *The House Carpenter*.

Folkways has recently released two very interesting LP discs. The first contains a group of French Canadian Folk Songs sung by Alan Mills. Mr. Mills is a native of Montreal and has been singing folk songs for some twenty years—first as a hobby and more recently professionally. He is well known to Canadian listeners because of his weekly program which is heard every Sunday over the National Service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It is said that many listeners, who are within range in the United States, tune in his program regularly. Those interested will find Mr. Mills' recordings highly satisfactory we are sure—he has a pleasing voice, and his diction is well high perfect. Mr. Mills has a very fine booklet to go with his recordings containing interesting notes and the French text of each song.

The second record contains a group of "American Tragic Ballads" sung by Andrew Roman Summers

who accompanies himself upon a dulcimer. Mr. Summers is a native of Virginia and after receiving his degree in law from the University of Virginia devoted much of his spare time to research in the field of folk music in his native state. The present recordings together with others that he has made for Folkways are the result of this research. Those interested in music of this character will find Mr. Summers' new record equally as attractive as his former ones. A very nice booklet containing pertinent notes and the text of each song is included with this new record.

English Songs and Folksongs. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by Phyllis Spurr (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-538) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Ye Banks and Braes*; *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal*; *Over the Mountains*; *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes*; *Fair House of Joy*; *O Waly, Waly*; *I Have a Bonnet Trimmed with Blue*; *My Boy Willie*; *I Know Where I'm goin'*; *I Will Walk with My Love*; *The Stuttering Lovers*.

Of the eleven songs that Miss Ferrier has chosen for this LP disc, six are English, four are Irish and one is Scottish. All are quite delightful and this fine contralto presents them in a most interesting manner. The words of each song will be found on the back of the record envelope. This is of great importance because one should be familiar with the text if he is fully to appreciate such ballads.

Beethoven: Egmont, Op. 84—Incidental music. (Sung in German). Käthe Nentwig (soprano); Michael Konstantinow (narrator); with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7640) \$5.95.

Beethoven was tremendously impressed with Goethe's epic drama *Egmont* and identified himself very closely with its hero. So much did the Master of Bonn value the play that he offered to write the incidental music for Joseph Hartl, director of the Vienna Hoftheater without charge. Those familiar with Beethoven's somewhat complicated nature, insofar as finances were concerned, may judge the degree of his love for the play.

The music comprises the familiar *Overture*, in F Minor and nine pieces (1) *Lied (Die Trommel gerühret)*, (2) *Interlude, Acts 1 and 2*, (3) *Interlude, Acts 2 and 3*, (4) *Lied (Freudvoll und Leidvoll)*, (5) *Interlude, Acts 3 and 4*, (6) *Interlude, Acts 4 and 5*, (7) *Larghetto (Clarchens Tod)*, (8) *Melodrama* and (9) *Siegessymphonie*. All the music is on a high plane, the same exalted feeling that pervades the *Overture* is in evidence throughout the subsequent numbers.

One has been spoiled, it must be confessed, by concert performances of the *Overture*. Certainly no theatre today can boast of a hundred-piece orchestra and it is to be doubted if the Vienna Hoftheater had such a band. And yet the orchestra used in this recording seems small and anemic by comparison

with the modern symphony orchestras used in present-day concert halls. The other pieces come off well, however, and Miss Nentwig sings Clara's music with real feeling. The Narrator, whose activities are confined to the *Melodrama*, speaks his lines sonorously and with considerable effect.

Rolf Reinhardt's forces, limited though they may be, have spirit and do very well considering their relatively small numbers. The performance is a tasteful one, stylish and straightforward.

The prospective purchaser must be warned that the Pro Musica Orchestra is no match for a major American or European group, nor is Miss Nentwig any Flagstad. On the other hand, the chances of a combination of, for example, Miss Flagstad and a major orchestra recording this glorious music are, one fears, very remote (although stranger things have happened). Moderately good recording and texts are supplied.

Because You're Mine. Mario Lanza (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Constantine Callinicos. 4-10" discs in album (V-DM-7015) \$5.17. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7015) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: (1) *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Addio alla madre; (2) *Granada* (Lara); (3) *Mamma mia che vo' sape?* (Russo); (4) *The Lord's Prayer* (Malotte); (5) *The Song Angels Sing* (Webster); (6) *Because You're Mine* (Cahn); (7) *You Do Something to Me* (Porter); (8) *Lee-ah-loo* (Lehman).

NOTE: Items (1) through (4) (above) contained on 1-7" disc (øV-ERA-51) \$1.58; items (5) and (6) contained on 1-7" disc (øV-49-3914) \$1.16, or 1-10" disc (V-10-3914) \$1.16.

To greet the release of Mario Lanza's new picture, "Because You're Mine," RCA Victor makes available recordings of a number of selections that are featured in it. Lanza fans will find them of a wide variety, from *Addio alla madre* from "Cavalleria Rusticana" to Cole Porter's *You Do Something to Me*. If "Because You're Mine" is anything like the success the earlier pictures were, "The Great Caruso," "That Midnight Kiss" and "The Toast of New Orleans," these recordings are bound to enjoy an immense sale.

Romberg: The Student Prince. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Rounseville (tenor) with supporting cast, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 6-7" discs in box (øC-A-1032) \$7.40. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4592) \$5.45.

Columbia continues with its fine series of musical plays on LP with this outstanding recording of the ever-popular *The Student Prince* featuring Dorothy Kirsten and Robert Rounseville. These excellent artists are splendidly supported by a fine cast and a chorus of more than average merit, with a large orchestra—all under the able direction of Lehman Engel.

PIANO

Chopin: Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35 ("Funeral March"). Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1472) \$3.99. Coupled with **Piano Music of Chopin and Liszt** (TNR Feb. '48). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1235) \$5.72.

This Chopin Sonata was reviewed in the January 1951 issue, when it was released coupled with Barber's *Sonata for Piano, Op. 26* (*V-LM-1113). Although it is still available in the Barber coupling, those who might not care for that combination may wish to choose the present one, backed by the Chopin and Liszt selections originally issued several years ago.

Chopin: Polonaise No. 6 in A-flat, Op. 53 ("Heroic"). One side, and **Debussy: Clair de lune** and **Liszt: Liebestraum.** Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8156) \$2.98.

Strauss—arr. Schulz-Evler: On the Beautiful Blue Danube. One side, and **Strauss—arr. Pennario: Emperor Waltz.** Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8167) \$2.98.

On these two LP discs will be found several popular selections played in fine style by the brilliant young pianist, Leonard Pennario. Capital has supplied particularly faithful piano reproduction.

ORGAN

Bach: Sei gegrüsst, Jesu gütig. One side, and **Bach: Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her.** Helmut Walcha (organ). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9615) \$5.85.

Decca's proposed issue of twenty-three LP's to cover the complete organ works of Bach (excepting only very early works and those of doubtful authenticity) is proceeding steadily. Decca's Archive Series will also include other works missing in the recorded repertoire of music from earliest times to the middle of the 18th century. This month their Bach organist, Helmut Walcha, performs two sets of variations. *Sei gegrüsst*, or "All hail, Thou goodly Jesus," consists of eleven chorale variations, harmonic and contrapuntal, starting with one in two parts, to the eleventh which is in five parts. The entire work is a collection of examples for variations technique.

Among the scholastic devices of musical construction the *canon* is the severest. The composer here assumes the obligation to follow strictly some rules in working out his theme, rules applying to the imitation of the theme in the several parts. Bach did not really originate new types of canons, but gave new impetus to the composition of this species by transplanting it from the modal into the realm of tonal music. Especially noteworthy are his canonic variations on the Christmas song *Vom*



Himmel hoch, or "From heaven high, thence do I come." Hans David found this music the most learned work Bach ever composed, a true show piece of art and artifice, but also a thoroughly enjoyable piece of music.

Whether Mr. and Mrs. music lover or record buyer will find all of this music enjoyable is something they can best decide for themselves. We think it rather severe for most folks. There is little doubt that most serious organists and Bach students will find it much to their liking. Walcha is an acknowledged specialist in Bach, and as one of his greatest interpreters Walcha upholds his reputation easily in these difficult works. The organs used are St. Jakobi, Lubeck, and the Schnitger at Cappel, real baroque jobs which are supposed to lend the last word in authenticity to Bach performances. The reproduction is excellent. S.

Bach Organ Music. Catharine Crozier playing the organ in Kilbourn Hall, Eastman School of Music (Rochester, N. Y.). 1-12" disc (*KENDALL LP-2551) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (4) *Chorale-Preludes*: "Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist"; "Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter?"; "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland"; "Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein." *Passacaglia* and *Fugue in C minor*.

Reubke: Sonata on the 94th Psalm. Catharine Crozier playing the organ in Kilbourn Hall, Eastman School of Music (Rochester, N. Y.) 1-12" disc (*KENDALL LP-2552) \$5.95.

French Organ Music. Catharine Crozier playing the organ in Kilbourn Hall, Eastman School of Music (Rochester, N. Y.) 1-12" disc (*KENDALL LP-2553) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Hymne d'actions de grâces "Te Deum"* (Langlais); *Variations sur un Noël* (Dupré); *Le Tumulte au Prétoire* (Maleingreau); *Les Bergers* ("La Nativité du Seigneur") (Messiaen); *Le Banquet Céleste* (Messiaen); *Litanies* (Alain).

Many of our readers may not know of Catharine Crozier; those who attend local organ recitals have in all probability heard her or heard of her. She is a recitalist of note, having toured the country several times. She graduated with the highest honors from the Eastman School of Music and has been a faculty member since 1938. Her recitals always win high praise and these records will add still more to her laurels. She is known as an able interpreter of contemporary music as well as of Bach and the Romantic composers. These three records present her in all three roles.

The Bach disc contains four of the loveliest chorale-preludes, including one of our prime favorites *Come, Redeemer of Our Race*. Miss Crozier plays this one superbly. The great *Passacaglia* has had numerous recordings, every one (of the organ ones) of solid merit. Heitman, Walcha, Weinrich, and White have given sterling readings, and Miss

Crozier's is no less a fine job by comparison.

The Reubke sonata appears for the first time on LP. This is one of the great masterworks for organ of its period, and is an architectural masterpiece of tremendous power and musical worth. We can recall one or two more dynamic readings of this extraordinarily difficult work, but Miss Crozier's interpretation is in itself a rock of strength and fine playing.

The six modern French works comprise the finest organ record of this type yet produced. The choice of these pieces hits the high spots perfectly, for they are six of the greatest pieces from this school of composition. Miss Crozier is splendid in every one.

The organ used on all these discs is the one in Kilbourn Hall at Eastman, an instrument of about one hundred registers, originally an Ernest M. Skinner, but rebuilt in 1951 by Aeolian-Skinner. It is a warm, rich instrument, and one of great appeal and not great squeal. The reproduction is good, not the best in the organ field, but very satisfactory; the surfaces on transparent red vinylite are very quiet. S.

Musical for Meditation. Virgil Fox (organ). 1-10" disc (*CAAL-20) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *Xerxes—Largo* (Handel); *Symphony No. 2—Scherzo* (Vierne); *Suite No. 3—Air for G String* (Bach); *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan); *Symphony No. 5—Largo* (Dvořák); *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* (Elgar).

The label says that this is "music for meditation," but we do not know just what one might meditate about whilst listening to Vierne's *Scherzo* or Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1*. We would rather describe this LP disc as one containing some tricky arrangements of a number of well-known tunes on a church organ (Riverside Church, New York) that sounds like one of the great movie organs that were so popular a number of years ago.

DICTION



Will Rogers Says. Will Rogers (speaking) with commentary by Will Rogers, Jr. 1-12" disc (*CML-4604) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *On Paying Taxes*; *On Fishing from Astor's Yacht*; *On Inheritance Taxes*; *On Farm Plan and Sharing Wealth*; *On Comedians*; *On Flo Ziegfeld*; *On the Giant Lottery*; *On Gold*; *On Government Spending*; *On the Pilgrims and Indians*; *On Buried Civilizations*; *On Making Movies in Sacramento*; *On Mother's Day*; *On Return After Seven Weeks Abroad*; *On the Baer-Carnera Fight*; *On Everybody Being Worried*; *On Who Shall Play Santa Claus*; *On Rogers' Commission to Russia*; *On Living in Russia*; *On State-Legislatures*; *On Everybody Having a Plan*; *On Taxes, Movies and Greta Garbo*.

Those of us who remember that tragic 15th of August, 1935, remember the empty feeling we had

when we realized that the drawl of Will Rogers would be heard no more. It was like losing a personal friend, such was the great satirist's insight into our cares and thoughts. Yet, through the magic of the record, we can now reminisce with Will Rogers through the twenties and early thirties simply by putting this LP disc on our phonograph.

It is amazing, however, to note how much of Rogers' material is timely today (hear particularly "On Government Spending," "On Living in Russia," "On Everybody Having a Plan"). We wonder whether one of the younger generation, who may never have heard the inimitable Will in person, will think this record funny; we must confess to more than a few chuckles in the midst of our nostalgia.

An excellent thumbnail sketch of Rogers' rise to fame is included in the ample program notes on the back of the LP jacket. The sound of Rogers' voice, taken from recordings of actual broadcasts, is obviously just that; but every word can clearly be distinguished.

Molière: Le Misanthrope (In French). Members of the Académie Française. 1-12" disc (PE-FRL-1504) \$5.95.

Racine: Phèdre (In French). Members of the Académie Française. 1-12" disc (*PE-FRL-1504) \$5.95.

How is your French? Would you like to improve it? If so these LP discs offer a marvelous opportunity. Scenes from these two 17th century French plays have been recorded by members of the Académie Française and with the recordings is supplied a nicely printed booklet containing the recorded French text. Advanced students and teachers should find these fine recordings of classic French highly interesting.

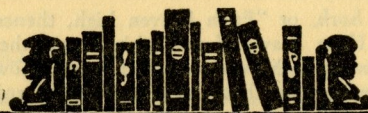
MISCELLANEOUS



Folk Music of Japan. Recorded in Japan by Edward Norbeck in 1950-51. 1-12" disc (*FOLKWAYS FP-429) \$5.95.

Religious Music of India. Recorded in India under the direction of Alain Danielou. 1-12" disc (*FOLKWAYS FP-431) \$5.95.

Because of the very limited appeal of these two LP discs we must be content to simply list them so that our readers will know that they are available. With each disc is a nicely illustrated booklet with copious notes that fully explain the various recordings. Students of oriental culture will surely find these discs well worth investigation.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, COL—Colosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, FEST—Festival, HS—Haddon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 88 $\frac{3}{4}$ rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 10

DECEMBER, 1952

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

SINCE the advent of long playing records the problem of storing them properly has been a difficult one. Various albums have been designed and placed upon the market, but none of them has proved entirely satisfactory. About two years ago the publishers of this bulletin designed a case known as the HRS LP Case No. 7. It is a substantial dust-proof case bound in simulated Levant leather. Its rounded back stamped with 23 k. genuine goldleaf gives it the appearance of a finely bound book. This case has proved far superior to any album because, in the first place, it is dust proof; this is very important as owners of LP records have found. In the second place the LP records may be placed in this case in their original protective envelopes.

As an experiment these were made in the 12-inch size only, and a few important dealers were selected to offer them to the public. After a slow start, because it was an entirely new item, the record buying public found it to be highly satisfactory, and now it is available through some five hundred of the better dealers all over the country. Now that there are many fine 10-inch LP records on the market there has developed a demand for the HRS LP Case No. 7 in the 10-inch size. About the first of December dealers will have this new 10-inch case in stock.

Each case holds 10 LP records in their original envelopes and they are now available in two sizes and four colors (Red, Blue, Green and Tan). The 10-inch case is priced at \$2.75 and the 12-inch at \$2.95 (West of the Mississippi and in the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi the prices are \$3 for the 10-inch case and \$3.25 for the 12-inch). If perchance these cases are not available from your local dealer, orders sent direct will be promptly filled upon receipt of proper remit-

tance. On orders for only one case please add 25c to partly cover parcel post and insurance. Orders for two or more cases will be sent postage paid within U.S.A. Please be sure to specify size and color when ordering.

As these beautiful cases are each wrapped in Cellophane they will make very acceptable and distinctive gifts.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these (49 copies) may be had at the special price of \$3 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("Great") (B. & H. No. 7). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-619) \$5.95.

While the Schubert *Ninth* has not dogged the record companies like the Beethoven *Ninth*, it has still caused them some grief, for record buyers have had a hard time finding their idea of "the" recording of this great work. For most of us, Bruno Walter (*C-ML-4093) presented a reading as lofty and heroic as could be wished within the framework of the score. Mengelberg was plenty heroic, if not always within the limits of the score. Toscanini (*V-LM-1040) produced a reading that was volatile and revealing, but not blessed with Viennese sweetness—an unimportant matter to some who invest in this record. Josef Krips supplies all the Viennese flavor you could want in his new disc. It is a thoroughly traditional and idiomatic performance, not world-shaking, but good and solid. He is a noted Schubert interpreter and won a tremendous ovation for his conducting of this score at the recent

Holland Festival. This recording was made immediately after that concert. The Concertgebouw Orchestra plays magnificently and the reproduction is splendid. Our personal choice for a Schubert Ninth is between Walter and Krips. Walter is a shade more eloquent, Krips has reproduction which is possibly better on critical phonographs. We respect those who choose Toscanini for his kinetic reading, but we lean toward a sweeter and, in our minds, a more Schubertian reading.

For those not familiar with the differences in numbering this symphony, it is often called No. 7 after the Breitkopf and Härtel numbering. This is misleading because it gives the impression that this work came chronologically before the "Unfinished" when it was, in fact, written six years later, in the last spring of the composer's life. There exists, moreover, a Symphony No. 7 in E by Schubert, dating from 1821, which he never orchestrated but which is occasionally performed in Weingartner's orchestral version. In any event the present symphony can always be identified by the title "Great C major" which fits it aptly and also distinguishes it from the composer's No. 6 in the same key. S.

Roussel: Le Festin de l'Araignée ("The Spider's Feast"). One side, and **Roussel: Le Marchand de Sable Qui Passe** ("The Sandman"). Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*ESOTERIC ES-511) \$5.95.

The Sandman is here recorded for the first time; *The Spider's Feast* appears on LP for the first time. *The Sandman* was composed in 1908, a period of transition for Roussel, which resulted in the composer's playing an important part in the evolution of French tonal art. This music foreshadows some of the remarkable qualities which appear in his later works. It is a charming suite, probably of no great consequence but certainly pleasant to the ear. Scored for a small ensemble, this incidental music for a ballet-pantomime was choreographed to a text by Jean-Aubry. Its four sections comprise a suite which you may find provides something different in dinner or background music.

Most folks familiar with records have heard of *The Spider's Feast*, for it has had several good recordings in recent years. The present set is also a fine performance, and well recorded. Leibowitz plays both this and *The Sandman* with a sympathetic understanding of the composer, including plenty of dash and color in *The Spider's Feast*. This disc also offers no duplication of couplings; there are five other Roussel works in the LP catalogs at present.

The Spider's Feast is easily the most popular of Roussel's works in our concert halls, followed probably by the *Suite in F*. The music reflects the fanciful and even surrealistic essence of the choreography of the ballet about the spider, its feasts, and, finally, its death. Edward Burlingame Hill aptly describes the episodes as "vitalized in music of unfettered invention, often acridly dissonant but an unflinching

counterpart to dramatic situations. Its ingenuity does not descend to unbecoming subtlety, nor does it once overstep its stylistic boundaries." We think it a fascinating work and enjoy hearing it frequently. S.

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte, K. 620—Overture. BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Overture.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-7" disc (ØV-WEPR-14) \$1.58.

Toscanini has a flair for playing overtures—he seems thoroughly to enjoy conducting such old favorites as one finds on this little 45 rpm disc.* Listen to this record and join in the conductor's enjoyment—both selections are splendidly recorded.

Benny Goodman Jazz Concert No. 2 (1937/8).

Benny Goodman (clarinet), his orchestra, trio, and quartet, featuring Harry James, Lionel Hampton, Gene Krupa, Teddy Wilson, Ziggy Elman. 2-12" discs (*C-ML-4590 and *C-ML-4591) \$5.45 each. Also available 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-180) \$12.11.

CONTENTS: (Vol. I) *Ridin' High; Nice Work If You Can Get It; Vibraphone Blues; Sheik of Araby; Peckin'; Sunny Disposish; Nagasaki; St. Louis Blues; Sugar Foot Stomp; Moonglow; I'm a Ding Dong Daddy; I Hadn't Anyone Till You; Always; Down South Camp Meetin'; Sweet Leilani; Sometimes I'm Happy; Roll 'Em.* (Vol. II) *King Porter Stomp; Have You Met Miss Jones; Shine; Minnie the Moocher's Wedding Day; Runnin' Wild; You Turned the Tables on Me; Darktown Strutters' Ball; My Gal Sal; Bugle Call Rag; Clarinet Marmalade; Time on My Hands; Stardust; Benny Sent Me; Everybody Loves My Baby; Josephine; Killer Diller; Someday, Sweetheart; Caravan; Goodbye.*

Unsung hero of the year for jazz fans is a chap named Bill Savory, now a Columbia engineer, for having recorded these top drawer samples off the air from Benny Goodman's old "Caravan" radio show of 1937/8. Everything is here except the announcer's suggesting that we walk a mile for his product.

We recall that the "Caravan" came on too late at night for us to be allowed to sit up and listen, so we had to sneak our bedside radio on after our parents thought we were sound asleep; and we were "sent," if they're still using that term today. We have always thought that Goodman got more music out of his trio and quartet than most big bands produce today; and the rocksteady beat of that orchestra. . . well, it still thrills!

Excellent program notes are printed on the backs of the LP jackets. We might mention that as an added bonus for buying the album, you get a recording of the Goodman theme, *Let's Dance*, and a brief introduction by Benny himself; Columbia has advised us that the first thousand albums (*C-SL-180

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
g indicates 45 rpm.

only) will be autographed by Goodman. If you don't like jazz yourself, here's the Christmas gift for that swing-loving child, grandchild, niece or nephew that is sure to please. J.

Casals Festival at Perpignan (Vol. I—Mozart).

Soloists, Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 4-12" discs plus 1 Casals Inscription disc in album (*C-SL-16) \$22.59.

CONTENTS: *Serenade in G*, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"); *Symphony No. 29 in A major*, K. 201; *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat*, K. 364 (with Stern and Primrose); *Concerto No. 5 in A*, K. 219 ("Turkish") (with Morini); *Divertimento No. 11 in D*, K. 251 (with Tabuteau); *Quartet in F*, K. 370 (Tabuteau, Stern, Primrose and Tortelier).

Casals Festival at Perpignan (Vol. II—Mozart).

Soloists, Perpignan Festival Orchestra conducted by Pablo Casals. 4-12" discs plus 1 Casals Inscription disc in album (*C-SL-168) \$22.59.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 1 in G for Flute and Orchestra*, K. 313 (with Wummer); *Concerto No. 14 in E-flat for Piano and Orchestra*, K. 449 (with Istomin); *Concerto No. 9 in E-flat for Piano and Orchestra*, K. 271 ("Jeunehomme") (with Myra Hess); *Concerto No. 22 in E-flat for Piano and Orchestra*, K. 482 (with Serkin); *Concerto No. 27 in B-flat for Piano and Orchestra*, K. 595 (with Horszowski).

Columbia has now selected eight LP records from its Casals Perpignan Festival recordings containing Mozart compositions and placed four in each of two albums as listed above. With each album there is included without charge a so-called "inscription" record. This is a 12-inch LP disc with a short musical selection on one side and the reverse side is blank except for the impression of the following inscription in Casals' handwriting with his signature: "The core of any important enterprise or activity must be character and kindness." The musical selection on the "inscription" record in Vol. I is Haydn: *Adagio* (from "Sonata No. 9 in D major for Piano") played by Casals (violin) and Istomin (piano). In Vol. II the selection is Bach: *Aria* (from "Organ Pastorale in F") played by Casals (violin) with the Perpignan Festival Orchestra.

Vaughan Williams: Flos Campi. Concert Hall Chamber Orchestra conducted by Robert Hull, with Francis Tursi (viola) and the Cornell A Cappella Chorus. One side, and **Johnson: Letter to the World.** Concert Hall Chamber Orchestra conducted by Robert Hull. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1151) \$5.95.

Concert Hall offers two selections of more than usual interest, both of which are new to the LP catalog. First we have Vaughan Williams' musical evocation for solo viola, wordless chorus and orchestra from *The Song of Solomon*, entitled *Flos Campi*. Each of its six sections takes its mood from

a line or two from this book of the Old Testament, and the composer has developed, as David Hall so nicely puts it, "a richly-colored score of the most exquisite sensitiveness and subtle poetry." This work dates from 1925 and was written at the request of the eminent English violist, Lionel Tertis. In the present recording the viola part is played by a student of Mr. Tertis, Francis Tursi, who is a concert artist of note and a member of the faculty of the Eastman School of Music. The vocal sections are sung by the very able Cornell A Cappella Chorus. All in all this is an outstanding recording of a work of great beauty—one that will whet the appetite of those music lovers who are hungry for something new in the musical idiom—not something that is grotesque but that which is of the most delicate fabric and stimulates the imagination towards the ethereal.

Letter to the World by the American composer, Hunter Johnson, who won the *Prix de Rome* in 1933 and was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1941, was written for the Martha Graham Ballet and is based on the life of the poetess, Emily Dickinson. It was a great success and had upwards of two hundred performances in the United States and Latin America. The present suite, which comprises about one-half of the music of the original ballet, was scored for chamber orchestra in 1952. The title is a line from a poem by Miss Dickinson, and the action is built on the legend rather than the facts of her life; the scene is laid in the shadow world of her imagination as set forth in her poems, rather than in the real world in which she lived. As in Vaughan Williams' *Flos Campi*, the listener is given ample opportunity to use his imagination, and the result is a musical experience of rare and delicate charm. R.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50006) \$5.95.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50007) \$5.95.

Mercury continues its steady march to build up a fine classical catalog with two oft-recorded repertoire staples. Mercury has fine reproduction, a widely acknowledged fact by now, as well as a growing roster of some of America's best symphony orchestras. Rafael Kubelik has breathed new life into the once illustrious Chicago orchestra in the couple of years he has had this group. Both of the recordings show the ensemble to have a fine finish, nice tone, and good solo players. At times they are hard to tell from the major Eastern orchestras. But there is, to our ears, quite a difference in the over-all panoply of orchestral tone as compared to the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy and the Philadelphians have very recently issued new discs of both these works, and they are formidable competition for any other

versions. Ormandy's *Pathétique* is not quite as frenetic as Kubelik's; but the tonal quality of the Philadelphia Orchestra is thicker and more romantic. The result is one we prefer, and we can recommend the Ormandy disc (*C-ML-4544) over the Kubelik—the reproduction is no deciding factor here; it is excellent in both cases. Ormandy still leads the list on *Pathétiques*.

Kubelik meets Ormandy again in the Brahms (*C-ML-4477). In this one both men have a rather straight interpretation, and there is not too much to choose from on this angle. The reproduction is again good on both discs, Columbia has a rounder tone with more bloom and warmth, Mercury's tone is a bit thinner and more strident, very clear and transparent. It almost amounts to which one sounds better on your phonograph. There are other good versions of the Brahms *First*, but at this point it is between Ormandy and Kubelik, not only for a good performance, but for the best reproduction. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat. One side, and **Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel Suite** ("Overture," "Dream Pantomime" and "Waltz"). Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Barlow. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3010) \$3.08. (TNR Nov. '40 & Dec. '40).

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("Great"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Frederick Stock. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3008) \$3.08. (TNR May '40).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3009) \$3.08. (TNR Apr. '40).

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 26. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3007) \$3.08. (TNR Sept. '41).

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3006) \$3.08. (TNR Feb. '41).

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. One side, and **Reznicek: Donna Dianna—Overture.** And **Sibelius: Swan of Tuonela, Op. 22, No. 3.** And **Enesco: Romanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A, Op. 11, No. 1.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Frederick Stock. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3002) \$3.08. (TNR Feb. '40 & Sept. '41).

With the above six LP discs Columbia announces its new "Entré" series of low-priced long playing records. As all of these selections have been previously reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS (see dates in headings above) it is necessary only to say a word about the reproduction.

Readers will recall that in announcing its long playing record back in 1948, Columbia stated cate-

gorically that every classical selection it had recorded during the previous ten years had been recorded on special high fidelity tapes with the expectation of future release via some yet undiscovered high fidelity medium. It is not surprising, then, to note that the reproduction of these LP's are as good as any but the very finest LP's being issued today, and certainly the finest of the lower-priced brands. Surfaces are good, too, although not up to those on Columbia's higher priced series.

Berners: The Triumph of Neptune—Ballet Suite. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. One side, and **Arnell: Punch and the Child—Ballet Music.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4593) \$5.45.

Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson (1883-1950) inherited his baronetcy in 1918, and it was with his title of Lord Berners that he signed all but his earliest compositions. Largely self-taught, Berners became a master parodist and ironist and has been dubbed "the English Satie."

The Triumph of Neptune was commissioned by Diaghilev and first performed by his Russian Ballet in December, 1926; the present orchestral suite, which was taken from it, was introduced to America by Sir Thomas at a concert by the New York Philharmonic early in 1936. We heard him do it with the Philadelphians last year, when this recording was undoubtedly made; he got the rousing hand he deserved, for Sir Thomas has no peer in this sort of good, clean fun. A previous recording (TNR May '38) by Beecham and the London Philharmonic is now deleted and was not available for comparison.

Richard Arnell (1918-) has been described as among the most gifted of the young English musicians to come into prominence since World War II; the present suite from *Punch and the Child*, indeed, indicates this to be true and makes a perfect coupling for the Berners work. This is the first of Arnell's works to appear in this country on records; may we searchers for the novel in ballet music hope for more? Sir Thomas again leaves his stamp of authority; it is unlikely that a better performance will come along. J.

Music of Johann Strauss. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-262) \$6.29. (TNR June '35). Coupled with **Album of Strauss Waltzes.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9025) \$5.72.

Album of Strauss Waltzes. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-445) \$5.14. (TNR June '38). Coupled with **Music of Johann Strauss.** 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9025) \$5.72.

Victor has re-issued two of the most popular Strauss albums ever made on this new LP disc; it contains: *Wine, Woman and Song; Artists' Life;*

Emperor Waltz; The Blue Danube; Acceleration Waltz; Gypsy Baron—Overture; and Die Fledermaus—Overture.

Ippolitov-Ivanov: Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Scheuchter. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-137) \$3.

Suk: Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 6. One side, and **Smetana—trans. Byrns: (6) Bohemian Dances.** Byrns Chamber Symphony Orchestra conducted by Harold Byrns. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8174) \$4.98.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1. One side, and **Grieg: (4) Norwegian Dances, Op. 35.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3001) \$4.85.

The three LP discs listed above contain a group of tuneful selections that one might find on programs of summer "Pops" orchestra concerts. All are light and easy to enjoy. The performance and the reproduction of each is highly satisfactory.

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Friz Lehmann. One side, and **Liszt: Les Préludes.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7530) \$3.85.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Waltzes. One side, and **Liszt: Les Préludes.** INR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Franz André. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8173) \$3.98.

Here we have two recordings of Liszt's *Les Préludes* of about equal quality, neither of them outstanding. Thus it depends upon whether you would rather have *Capriccio Italien* or the *Rosenkavalier Waltzes* on the reverse side.

Herbert: Pan Americana and Herbert: American Fantasy. One side, and **Herbert: Irish Rhapsody.** Philadelphia Orchestra "Pops" conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-21) \$2.85.

Victor Herbert is best known for his tuneful operettas, but here we have three of his orchestral works very nicely performed by Ormandy and the Philadelphia "Pops."

CONCERTO



Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. Isaac Stern (violin) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. One side, and **Sibelius: (4) Scènes historiques ("Festivo, Op. 25;" "At the Drawbridge, Op. 66;" "Love Song, Op. 66;" and "The Chase, Op. 66").** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4550) \$5.45.

In the October issue two new LP's of the Sibelius Violin Concerto were reviewed; now we have a third

—and by all odds the best. Our October review found neither of those issues ideal, and what was lacking in them is now present in Columbia's recording. Certainly Sir Thomas supplies a splendid orchestral collaboration, the reproduction is excellent, and Isaac Stern again proves himself one of our foremost fiddlers with another superb performance of a major concerto. This is truly a great reading and virtually flawless execution of the music, with excellent reproduction, making this the top version of the work, and one which will be difficult to better. As the October review gave a full account of the music, we will do no more than give this disc our highest recommendation and pass on to the music used as a coupling.

The *Four Historic Scenes* are short orchestral pieces drawn from suites written on two different occasions. The first suite, Op. 25, of which *Festivo* is a part, belongs to the year 1899 and was composed for historical tableaux at a gala night in Helsingfors, the climax of "Press Celebrations" which were demonstrations of revolt against the Russian regime. The celebrated *Finlandia* is actually a part of this group of pieces. *Festivo* is marked *Tempo di Bolero*. The three other scenes in this recording were composed thirteen years later in 1912, but they are in the same style as the earlier work. They are all immediately recognizable as Sibelius and will appeal to anyone who likes that master's symphonies. These are first recordings, except for *Festivo*.

Sir Thomas plays these orchestral pieces with a quality that few, if any, other conductors could duplicate. The Beecham way with Sibelius is well known and admired; even the tone of his orchestra is of the cool quality that suits this music perfectly. We found these most attractive; the disc as a whole, with the concerto and the rare Sibelius orchestral works, is indeed a prize package.

S.

Dvořák: Concerto in G minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 33. Friedrich Wührer (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7630) \$5.95.

Dvořák's *Piano Concerto in G minor* is a rather obscure work, entering American record lists for the first time. Its obscurity will never be rectified by today's virtuoso pianists for it is not the display piece that pianists, and their audiences as well, like to program. With that exception, it must be admitted this is a well constructed work, mature, and pleasant melodically. The structure is symphonic throughout. The handling of the orchestra and the style in general is patterned after Beethoven. The first movement is in Sonata form; the second is an *Andante sostenuto* of serene and song-like melodies with quite a charm; the third movement combines the Sonata and Rondo forms in a joyous movement, interspersed with lyrical episodes. There is nothing in the least difficult for the listener to comprehend and anyone will find it pleasant music every minute of the way. We would not claim it to be any masterpiece of the first mag-

nitude, but it is surely worth a hearing once in a while.

Not being familiar with this music, nor having any basis of comparison, we can only judge the performance by the impression it makes. Friedrich Wührer is a new pianist to us, but from what we can detect, a highly competent one, with a good, steady technique. His accuracy compares favorably with the Vienna Symphony, and is, in fact, better, probably because he practices more than they have time to. But this overworked group provides a well adjusted accompaniment under Moralt, who is in evident rapport with the soloist. The reproduction is good; a little more prominence to the solo instrument would have been welcome in the ensemble parts, but the general texture is pretty good. Those who are seeking something new, but not something modern, can be advised to investigate this disc. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op.

23. Monique de la Bruchollerie (piano) and the Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7720) \$5.95.

Although there are nearly a dozen recordings of this popular concerto already available on LP discs, we believe that quite a number of music lovers will welcome the opportunity of hearing Miss Bruchollerie's version—especially after the praise she received from the critics when she played it with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony last season.

In view of the fact that Miss Bruchollerie made her debut in the United States only last December with the Boston Symphony, a word or two about this brilliant artist is probably in order. She was born in Paris and, as a child, studied piano with the eminent pianist and teacher, Isidor Philipp. Under his guidance she won first prize at the Paris Conservatory. Later she won the International Competition in Vienna and the Chopin Prize at Warsaw. She made her professional debut with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Charles Münch in 1941. Since then she has toured extensively in Europe, Africa and South America, coming to America in the latter part of 1951 and making her debut in Boston as mentioned above.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30.

Moura Lympany (piano) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-617) \$5.95.

The Rachmaninoff *Third Concerto* begins with a simple lyrical theme, but as the work progresses it gathers much power. This is rather deceptive, for it is full of subtle touches, such as the opening passage. Rachmaninoff was a master at performing such music, and his recording of this work was indeed a memorable one, although no longer available (Victor should reissue it on the "Treasury Series" label). The *Concerto* is in the LP lists by Malcuzyński and Horowitz. Malcuzyński did a notable job with it, and Horowitz supplied even more muscular energy,

if little subtlety. Our choice was Malcuzyński, and he remains our choice. Moura Lympany is a fine artist who has made some excellent recordings, but she seems to lack some of the power needed for this work. Technically Malcuzyński is better, with a more masculine power where the score can use it. The lyric passages fare well under Lympany's hands, but in the final analysis she does not offer the well-balanced performance of Malcuzyński. Horowitz may be able to outplay them both, but he is quite lacking in finesse, which this work often demands, and the reproduction of his set is as brassy as his playing.

While the *Third Concerto* has never enjoyed the popularity of the *Second*, it is a bolder and more confident piece of work. There is a more complex process of development in which repetition is reduced to a minimum. The *Second*, with a simpler structure and abundance of lyricism, will continue to find more popular favor; but the *Third* is a more rewarding work and is certainly not lacking in lovely melody. Anyone who owns and enjoys the *Second* will find the *Third* equally as enjoyable; and with several versions from which to choose, we hope its popularity will rise. As you may have gathered, the *Third* is our favorite Rachmaninoff concerto, and we recommend it strongly as really fine, enjoyable music. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467. One side, and Mozart: Concerto No. 12 in A, K. 414.

Folmer Jensen (piano) with the Chamber Orchestra of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1054) \$5.95.

"Mozart's piano concertos," wrote the late Dr. Alfred Einstein, "are the peak of all his instrumental achievement, at least in the orchestral realm." The two works recorded here bear ample testimony to this comprehensive statement. *Concerto No. 12, in A* is the second in a group of three, all published in 1785 but written several years before. It differs in mood from its companions in that it is essentially poetic and gracious. The first movement is warm, tender and ingratiating, while the second movement contains a melody from an overture by Christian Bach. This movement may be considered a sort of homage to the composer, whom Mozart loved and who had died a few months prior to the composition of the *Concerto*. The last movement is almost operatic in character and is a sheer joy. Mozart's *cadenzas* are used.

The other work, the great *C major Concerto*, is quite a different matter. Here one enters a larger world, the world of the "Jupiter" Symphony and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Here is a mature composition, full of the amazing contrasts one always associates with Mozart. From the opening *allegro maestoso*, through the memorable *andante* to the Haydnesque *rondo-finale* there is never a dull moment. The

cadenzas, in this case, are the soloist's.

Folmer Jensen, the soloist in these concerti, is a well known Danish pianist who has been soloist with the Danish State Radio Orchestra for over twenty years. His playing is a model of style and precision. There is a clarity and warmth about his interpretations (re-creations, perhaps, would be a better word) that makes them at once enjoyable and authentic. Particularly worthy of note are the eminently suitable cadenzas he supplies for the *C major Concerto*—they do not stick out like a sore thumb and are not over-long. Of Mogens Wöldike it is not necessary to speak. Virtually everything he records is a model of interpretive clarity and correctness. Brilliant recording and excellent notes complete the offering.

W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 2 in G, Op. 18, No. 2.

One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet No. 3 in D, Op. 18, No. 3.** Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1202) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 6 in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 6.

One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95 ("Serious").** Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1204) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Op. 74

("Harfen"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5149) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet in F, Op. 135. One side, and

Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133. Barylli Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5151) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 97 ("Arch-

duke"). Trio di Trieste. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-599) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1.

Végh String Quartet: Sandor Végh, Sandor Zoel-
dy (violins); Georges Janzer (viola); Paul Szabo
(violoncello). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-588) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quintet in F minor, Op. 34. Joerg Demus

(piano) and the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet.
1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5148) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quintet in B minor, Op. 115. Leopold

Wlach (clarinet) and the Vienna Konzerthaus
Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5155) \$5.95.

We have been holding some of these records hoping that space would be available to consider each of them in some detail but with the avalanche of new recordings that has recently descended upon the studio we find this to be impossible. We must be content simply to list them with the assurance to our readers that the various works have been satisfactorily performed and that the reproduction is well up to present day standards.

Shostakovich: Quintet, Op. 57. Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8171) \$4.98.

This splendid recording of Shostakovich's famous *Quintet, Op. 57* is a valuable addition to the LP Catalog. You will doubtless recall that Shostakovich was awarded the Stalin prize of one hundred thousand rubles (allegedly the largest sum ever paid to a composer for a chamber work) after its first performance in Moscow in 1940. The composer played the piano part on that occasion. The first performance in the United States was given at Carnegie Hall in 1941 by Vivian Rivkin (piano) and the Stuyvesant Quartet. Since that time it has appeared again and again on chamber music programs in this country and has been acclaimed by both the public and the critics as one of the finest—if not the finest—works in this form to appear in the present century.

The *Quintet* is in five movements, none of which is very long, although each movement is of good substance and in fine contrast to the adjacent movements. The first movement is called *Prelude* and serves as such admirably. The second movement is a *Fugue* and is masterfully constructed, requiring repeated hearings for full appreciation of its content. The third movement is a *Scherzo*, clever and charming, while the fourth is an *Intermezzo* of searching qualities. The *Finale* is rather mixed in moods although there is a strong underlying unity. As a whole the *Quintet* will be hard for the average person to assimilate at first, but so was *spinach* to many. And like *spinach*, music such as the *Quintet* is necessary for a healthy musical countenance, and like *spinach* it is quite palatable, even desirable. Of course, it is anybody's prerogative to abandon the *Quintet* if he feels it is not necessary to cope with this new and strange music; but he will be stronger musically who takes this work in its stride and comprehends it.

The present rendition by the Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller (piano) is a highly satisfactory one and the Capitol reproduction is of the best. Another recorded version by the Chigi Quintet under the London label is listed in the latest LP catalogs, but a review copy has not reached us as yet so we have not had an opportunity of hearing it for comparison.

Ives: Sonata No. 1. One side, and **Ives: Sonata No. 3.** Joan Field (violin) and Leopold Mittman (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-17) \$5.95.

Charles Ives is certainly one of the most "American" of composers. He was a pioneer in the modern idiom around the turn of the century, but very little of his music was published until years later, when it was discovered that he had anticipated a great many modern composers. Today, at the age of seventy-seven, Ives is receiving more attention than ever before. The two works recorded on the present LP disc are typical of the work of this unusual American and worthy of the attention of all students of modern music. Henry Cowell has written excel-

dent detailed notes on both of them; these notes will be found on the back of the record envelope. The works have been splendidly performed by able artists and nicely recorded by Lyrichord.

Haydn: Quartet in G, Op. 77, No. 1. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in F, Op. 77, No. 2.** Heifetz Quartet: Daniel Guilet, Leonard Robbins (violins); Carlton Cooley (viola); and Benar Heifetz (violinello). 1-12" disc (*EMS-301) \$5.95.

E.M.S. announces that this is the first record in a series it expects to release of all of the Haydn Quartets played by the Heifetz Quartet. This looks like "love's labour lost" to us, for the Haydn Society has already issued twenty-two, among which are the two of Opus 77 listed above, in its series by the Schneider Quartet. As the renditions of the Schneider Quartet have been highly praised by the critics and seem to be entirely satisfactory to chamber music lovers generally, it would certainly seem that another series is not needed and could hardly hope to be commercially successful. All this is no reflection on the artistic merit of the Heifetz Quartet—a group of experienced and able chamber music players.

Debussy: (2) Danses ("Sacré" et "Profane"). One side, and **Ravel: Introduction and Allegro in G-flat.** Phia Berghout (harp) with the Chamber Music Society of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum 1-10" disc (*L-LL-621) \$4.95.

At the turn of the century the chromatic harp was gaining in prominence on the Continent and both Debussy and Ravel were commissioned to write a work for this instrument. The two selections listed above are the results of their efforts. Neither is a great work in itself but each is pleasing and gives the harpist a fine opportunity to display his instrument in a musical atmosphere of charm and refinement. The present performances and the reproduction are of high quality.

CHORAL



Bach: Weihnachts-Oratorium ("Christmas Oratorio"). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Roon (soprano), Dagmar Herrmann-Braun (contralto), Erich Majkut (tenor), Walter Berry (bass), Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7713) \$18.80.

The *Christmas Oratorio* (oratorio in name only) is actually, like so many of Bach's extended works, a string of cantatas, and dates from the relatively unhappy, but still productive, Leipzig period. This massive piece, rich in invention and profound thought deserves a place beside the monumental *Passions* and the *Mass in B minor*. It is divided into six parts, each dealing with a phase of the Christmas story as told in the Gospels. The music is divided among a quartet of soloists and, of course,

a large chorus. There are many well known portions in the score, notably the expressive *sinfonia* that introduces Part II, the lovely tenor aria *Frohe Hirten, eilt ach eilt* and the wonderful opening chorus *Jauchzet frohlocket* to mention but a few.

The soloists for this performance fall into the category of adequate but undistinguished. Elisabeth Roon has an acceptable light soprano, Dagmar Herrmann-Braun and Walter Berry may usually be relied upon to sing reasonably well. The chief disappointment is Erich Majkut who does not seem to be able to handle the florid passages with anything like ease. In his aria *Frohe Hirten* this inability reaches grotesque proportions. In the passage *Geht und laßt Herz und Sinnen* there is a long vocalization on the word *laßt* which he sings *la-ha-ha-ha-ha-bet*. One admits it is not fair to compare his version with that of Aksel Schiotz (which is what this reviewer did) but all the same. . . .

Ferdinand Grossmann directs with regard for text and a sure feeling for phrasing and dynamics is in evidence. Vox has done an acceptable job of recording and, in the interests of economy, has been able to record the long score in its entirety on three records.

The only other recording of the *Weihnachts-Oratorium* is a four record version on Renaissance. In addition to the higher price a brief hearing indicates the soloists are even less satisfactory than on the Vox set, and the conductorial job is not on a par with Grossmann's. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 189 ("Meine Seele rühmt und preist"). (Sung in German). Walther Ludwig (tenor) with chamber orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 53** ("Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde") and **Bach: Cantata No. 200** ("Bekennen will ich seinen Namen"). (Sung in German). Hildegard Hennecke (alto) with Chamber Orchestra of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis conducted by August Wenzinger. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9619) \$5.85.

Of the *Cantatas* recorded here, only one has been previously issued, *Cantata No. 189* "Meine Seele rühmt und preist." This work, assumed to have been written between 1707 and 1710 is a "solo-cantata," since it lacks a chorus, and is, of course, for tenor alone. The authenticity of the piece, while not widely doubted, is open to some question, since there is no genuine score extant, the present manuscript having been pieced together from parts found in Berlin in the early eighteen hundreds. It is characteristic of the younger Bach, however, and most authorities agree on its genuineness. Herr Ludwig, a veteran tenor, sings the music with unerring sense of style and reasonably good vocal quality. His voice naturally lacks some of the brilliance that made his pre-war HMV records noteworthy, but there is still enough left to make this an acceptable performance. The modest orchestral forces are under the direction of the capable Fritz Lehmann.

The other side is devoted to two *Cantatas* heretofore unrecorded. *Cantata* No. 53 "Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde" is another solo-cantata, this time for alto, and dates from sometime after 1730. The other piece is a fragment, identified here as *Cantata* No. 200 "Bekennen will ich seinen Namen." This was "discovered" in 1935 when the score changed hands. There is no doubt as to its authenticity, but the remainder of the *Cantata* is missing. It is works such as these that give musicologists a chance to spread themselves, and the various suppositions as to what happened to the remainder are outlined in Egon Kenton's excellent notes. Mlle. Hennecke is the possessor of a better than average alto, and she sings both works with intelligence and imagination. August Wenzinger directs the accompaniments. The reproduction is good. W.

Handel: Judas Maccabaeus. (Sung in English).

William Olvis, Marvin Sorensen (tenors); Phyllis Moffet (soprano); Beryl Jensen (alto); Marvin Hayes (basso); University of Utah Chorus directed by Dr. David A. Shand; Utah Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel, with Alexander Schreiner (organ) and Bruce Prince-Joseph (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album (*HANDEL SOCIETY HDL-12) \$18.85.

Judas Maccabaeus, first produced on 1 April 1747, served not only as a celebration of the Duke of Cumberland's (he was also known popularly as "Billy the Butcher" for his ruthless suppression of the Stuart sympathizers) victory at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, but it was also instrumental in rescuing Handel from one of his periodic financial dilemmas. The piece was a rousing success, as well it might be, and was given six times in 1747. Handel presented it thirty-eight more times before his death twelve years later.

There are many magnificent passages in this oratorio: *How vain is man?*; *Sound an alarm*; *See the conqu'ring hero comes*; *Sion now her head shall raise* (not in the original score, but a later addition) and *Arm, arm ye brave* to mention but a few. The music is all on a very high plane, even for Handel, and this despite the wretched "poetry" supplied by the Rev. Thomas Morell who was favored as a purveyor of *libretti* for some mysterious reason.

The performance recorded here gives only a faint glimpse of the wonders the score contains. There is not enough spirit; the singers and chorus and orchestra seem to lack vitality. The soloists, taken individually, all have acceptable voices—the chorus and orchestra have ability, but the spark is lacking—they are stodgy. Maurice Abravanel, while a sound musician, has not been able to infuse the necessary "get up and go" into his forces. It is doubtful if this lack is due to vocal inadequacies; it seems more on the psychological side. The recording, too, is somewhat uneven. Certain passages

sound fine while others, notably the recitative and air, *How vain is man?* are quite poor.

It is depressing to have to give a qualified review to some of the most exciting music ever written but such are the melancholy facts. There will be those whose love for Handel will enable them to transcend the technical and musical limitations of this recording—for those one can only say, here is *Judas Maccabaeus*. Others will be well advised to hear it first. W.

Anthems and Oratorio Choruses. Canterbury Choir conducted by Macklin Marrow, with Ernest White (organ). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-102) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Crucifixion*—God so loved the world (Stainer); *The Lord's Prayer* (Malotte); *Ave Verum Corpus* (Mozart); *Messe de Ste. Cécile*—Sanctus (Gounod); *Gallia*—Jerusalem, O turn unto the Lord (Gounod); *God is a Spirit* (Bennett); *The Holy City* (Adams); *Panis Angelicus* (Franck).

While Shepherds Watched. Canterbury Choir conducted by Macklin Marrow, with Ernest White (organ). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-147) \$3.

CONTENTS: *O Holy Night*; *We Three Kings*; *Away in a Manger* (Luther); *Coventry Carol*; *In the Bleak Mid-Winter*; *What Child Is This?*; *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*; *Angels We Have Heard on High*.

This pair of records will prove as thrilling as anything else on discs to those who love to hear a really fine church choir. This group, which records under the name of The Canterbury Choir, we suspect to be one of the finest choirs in New York City. The records sound as though they were recorded in this choir's church. One thing is certain, one of the top church musicians of this country plays the accompaniments.

We have never heard better renditions of the anthems and oratorio choruses than these. All of the numbers are thrice familiar, but everyone is a beautiful work of its kind, and to hear them done so magnificently is to hear them for the first time. This choir also can boast of exceptional soloists, for those who have solo parts in these works sing impeccably. We imagine every choirmaster who hears this disc will wander off into blissful thoughts of "Oh when will I ever get a choir like this one. . . ."

There are dozens of Christmas records on the market. Robert Shaw's two records are admittedly the finest collections available, both as to music and performance. But for those who want a handful of familiar Christmas numbers sung with organ accompaniment (Shaw's are unaccompanied), this disc will be hard to better. The diction is so clean and clear that every word is perfectly distinct. And the atmosphere of Christmas is served ever so nicely by this fine choir and their tasteful conductor and accompanist. For the music presented, we recommend these discs without reservation. S.

OPERA



Berlioz: Les Troyens à Carthage (complete). (Sung in French). Micheline Rolle (soprano); Arda Mandikian (mezzo-soprano); Jeannine Collard (contralto); Jean Girardeau, André Dran, Bernard Gallet (tenors); Georges Abdoun (baritone); Xavier Depraz, Jean Cazin, Gérard Abdoun (bassos); Ensemble Vocal de Paris directed by André Jouve; and Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-304) \$18.50.

"*Les Troyens*," writes W. J. Turner, "is not an opera in the ordinary sense; it is something rarer, described by Berlioz himself as a *tragedie lyrique*. (Berlioz) crowned and completed the search throughout the centuries from Monteverdi to Gluck for the musical-dramatic form of tragedy." Of Berlioz' struggles to have the piece performed in the Paris of the Second Empire one need not write. In the end he divided the original work (it lasted about six and a half hours) into two sections: (1) *La Prise de Troie* ("The Taking of Troy") and (2) *Les Troyens à Carthage* ("The Trojans at Carthage"). It is this latter section that is now presented in its first complete recording. Westminster has done an inestimable service for all musicians and music-lovers.

To be sure, the opera is admittedly difficult to cast but, with the exception of tenor trouble (a common occurrence, particularly in France) the whole affair comes off in a thrilling manner. Arda Mandikian, as Dido, is superb. She has a youthful mezzo-soprano that fits the part, and she is thoroughly convincing both in the love scenes and in the *finale* where, to the accompaniment of some of the greatest dramatic music ever written, she curses Aeneas and all his company. As her sister Anna, Jeannine Collard, a deep voiced alto, is also excellent. There are several bassos, all good; but Xavier Depraz as Narbal is outstanding.

The weakest link in the chain is Jean Girardeau, the Aeneas. Here is a perfect example of the spirit being willing and the flesh, alas, weak. Not that M. Girardeau is wholly inadequate—on the contrary he is dramatically convincing; but his voice is not the heroic tenor the part requires. In the big closing scene, *Inutiles regrets*, he turns in a thrilling performance despite certain vocal deficiencies. André Dran disappoints as Iopas. The music is obviously too much for him, and his air, *O blondes Ceres*, should have been remade—it is the only bad singing in the entire opera.

The orchestra and chorus under the talented Hermann Scherchen are first class. There is a tremendous amount of music in the orchestra, and it is brought out in exciting fashion. It is impossible

to describe the impression the *Chasse Royale et Ourage* makes here. This "symphonic entr'acte" is certainly a stroke of genius, something never before attempted in opera; its effect is overpowering!

The reader is urged to hear this extraordinary work. The recording, from a technical standpoint, is flawless—probably the best ever afforded a complete opera. The text, the work of Berlioz (with generous portions of Shakespeare and Vergil) is a thing of beauty. A translation that is a model of good taste is supplied and scholarly notes by Jacques Barzun are included. W.

Wagner: Lohengrin (complete). (Sung in German). Marianne Schech (soprano); Margarete Klose (contralto); George Vincent (tenor); Andreas Boehm (baritone); Kurt Böhme (basso); Chorus and Orchestra of the Munich State Opera conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 5-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-225) \$30.25.

Enterprising Urania Records, Inc., issues this month the first complete *Lohengrin* on records. The undertaking was a formidable one and, on the whole, successful. In a work as long as this one is, considering its difficulties, certain lapses are bound to occur; but in this recording they have been kept to a minimum.

The cast features a young American singer in the title role—George Vincent. Judging vocal quality from records, what with all the tricks a microphone and its associated components can achieve, is difficult but Vincent seems to be a real *Heldentenor*. He has a large voice, fresh, youthful and strong and, in addition, an unusually good sense of style. His is an excellent portrayal, both vocally and histrionically. Elsa von Brabany, in the person of Marianne Schech (who will be remembered as the fine Elisabeth of the same company's *Tannhäuser*) is a vocally personable heroine. At times her tones seem a bit forced and on the tired side, but the role is a taxing one. By and large she does very well—her singing of the dream scene *Einsam in trüben Tagen* is notable for its style and emotional conviction. As Telramund, the late Andreas Boehm is vocally sure and properly villainous; one regrets his early and tragic death. Margarete Klose is a seasoned singer, and her Ortrud is a finished characterization. Note must also be taken of the fine Heinrich der Vogler majestically sung by Kurt Böhme; it is an impressive performance.

One of the principal assets of this recorded *Lohengrin* is the presence of Rudolf Kempe at the director's desk. His reading of the score is distinguished by a keen sense of the proper tempo—from a relaxed performance of the *vorspiel* on through the lengthy score his sense of proportion and style never desert him—it is a sterling job.

Urania has recorded the performance in a manner that is above criticism. The balance between singer and orchestra is excellently maintained, and the orchestra itself sounds wonderful—clean soaring

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

strings, solid brass and massive choral passages are cleanly reproduced. A libretto, notes on the opera and pictures of the principals are included. W.

Richard Tauber Operatic Recital. Richard Tauber (tenor) with accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ETERNA ELP 0-466) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Bohème*—Che gelida manina; *Butterfly*—Addio, fiorito asil; *Mignon*—Adieu Mignon; *Bartered Bride*—Aria (Act II); *Aida*—Duet (Act IV); *Traviata*—Aria (Act II); *Rosenkavalier*—Di rigori armato.

Myerbeer: Le Prophete (highlights). Leo Slézak (tenor), Karin Branzell (contralto), Jeanne Manceau (contralto), and Rudolf Berger (tenor) with accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ETERNA ELP 0-476) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *John's Dream* (Slézak); *Pastorale* (Slézak); *O mein Sohn* (Branzell); *Hymne Triompahle* (Slézak); *Coronation March*; *Donnez, donnez* (Branzell); *Cavatine du Fides* (Manceau); *Drinking Song* (Berger).

Frieda Leider Operatic Recital. Frieda Leider (soprano) with accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ETERNA-ELP 0-477) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Ariadne auf Naxos*—Es gibt ein Reich; *Don Giovanni*—Rache-Arie; *Trovatore*—Conte di luna (with Schlusnus); *Tannhäuser*—Dich teure Halle; *Tristan und Isolde*—Isolde's Liebestod; *Siegfried*—Final Duet (Act III) (with Fritz Soot).

Great Scenes from Puccini Operas. Anne Roselle (soprano) and Alfred Piccaver (tenor) with accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ETERNA ELP 0-478) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Turandot*—Non piangere, Liù (Piccaver); In questa reggia (Roselle); *Nessun Dorma* (Piccaver); *Del primo pianto* (Roselle). *Bohème*—Addio di Mimi (Roselle); *Fanciulla del West*—Ch'ella mi creda (Piccaver); *Butterfly*—Addio, fiorito asil (Piccaver and Theodor Scheidl); *Butterfly*—Death of Butterfly (Roselle).

Eterna is issuing a series of LP discs under the general title "Famous Voices of the Past." Four of these unusual records are listed above. Apparently Eterna has secured European recordings of famous artists of another day, made when they were in their prime, and has dubbed them on LP discs. For the most part the transfer has been quite satisfactorily accomplished; however, since many of the original recordings are acoustic ones the accompaniments are weak, and there is a certain amount of surface noise.

Collectors of such recordings are familiar with these shortcomings, and as long as the voices come through with reasonable clarity, as they do on the present discs, they are satisfied. Those who are interested in such artists as Tauber, Slézak, Branzell, Leider, Piccaver et al will very likely find these Eterna records of real interest.

Haydn: Philémon und Baucis (complete). (Sung in German). Susana Naidie, Elizabeth Roon (sopranos); Erich Majkut, Waldemar Kmentt (tenors); Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Meinhard von Zallinger. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7660) \$5.95.

This recording of *Philémon und Baucis* poses a rather neat problem. The eminent Haydn scholar, Karl Geiringer, states that it was a "little puppet opera, first performed in 1773 on the occasion of Empress Maria Theresa's visit to Eszterháza." He then continues, "Unfortunately only a single *canzonet* of *Philémon* and the *overture* (even the authenticity of the *overture* can be questioned) to the opera have been preserved." And now we have a complete recording, with, of course, no notes nor explanation concerning anything!

Nevertheless, the work recorded here, be it Haydn's or not, is a charming score consisting of almost equal parts of singing and speaking. Both achieve a high level of excellence. This department has always been partial to what Charles Morgan once called "the hiss of good German, well spoken." The singers acquit themselves in fine fashion in both departments. Elisabeth Roon is a fresh, youthful Narcissa; Susana Naidie, a capital Baucis. Waldemar Kmentt and Erich Majkut are both favorably known in this country via their recordings; the former as Aret and the latter as *Philémon* sing well indeed.

Of Meinhard von Zallinger, one needs only to recall the superb *Idomeneo* he conducted for the Haydn Society. He is a sterling musician, one who brings a quality that can best be described as "glowing" to his performances. Certainly he breathes life into this score, and the resultant sound is very easy to take.

The complete lack of information concerning the genesis and, perhaps, discovery of this music is deplorable, however. With all the old music and music that most persons never heard of before being released, issuing companies should certainly let the customers in on the secrets. If the company does not know, then they might very well make it their business to find out—they have (or should have) the facilities. And Vox should not assume that everyone knows German—there is no English translation for the text. W.

Offenbach: La Belle Hélène (complete). (Sung in French). Janine Linda (soprano) and André Dran (tenor) with soloists, chorus and the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 2-12" discs in album (*REN-SX-206) \$12.55.

There is a character in Peacock's novel, *Headlong Hall*, a Mr. Milestone, who was shown a particularly elaborate landscape garden and he was told that its principal quality was that of *unexpectedness*, whereupon the astute Milestone said, "Pray sir, by what name do you distinguish this character when

a person walks round the grounds for a second time?" The same, one fears, holds true for the operettas of Offenbach, for *La Belle Hélène* does not seem as amusing and its gaiety seems a little forced, when compared with the magnificent *Orphée aux Enfers*. Offenbach, in *La Belle Hélène* at least, leads one up the garden a second time.

The cast for this recorded performance is a fine one, equally as good as that of *Orphée*. They sing well and have the spirit and roguishness necessary for a successful performance. André Dran, in his element as Paris, is able to cover most of his vocal inadequacies (no upper register) and Janine Linda, *la belle Hélène*, is equally at home with the music. Lucian Mans, the High Priest, is another outstanding performer. The balance of the cast is adept at the sort of fooling required and give a good account of themselves. High spots are Paris' entrance *Au mont Ida trois déesses* (transposed for M. Dran) and the grand scene wherein all the old Greek kings parade by.

Despite all this, however, there is a hollowness and emptiness about the scene that was missing in *Orphée*. Even René Leibowitz, who does his usual fine job musically, is not able to make the fooling convincing. The recording is, on the whole, good; but there are a few spots that are sub-standard. A complete libretto and intelligent notes are provided.

W.

Wagner: Die Götterdämmerung — Brünnhilde Schlussgesang (Act III). (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. One side, and **Wagner: Siegfried Idyll**. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1116) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (øV-LCT-1116) \$5.72. (TNR Dec. '44 & Sept. '47).

RCA Victor has re-issued these two works on the present LP disc, evidently in response to public demand. The transfer from original 78 rpm masters has been exceptionally well accomplished.

VOCAL



Rodgers: Oklahoma! Nelson Eddy (baritone) with soloists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4598) \$5.45.

Columbia is continuing with its recordings of outstanding musical plays. The present recording of the great hit *Oklahoma!* contains the complete musical score, including the song, *Lonely Room*, which we understand has not been recorded before. We are sorry to report that Columbia has not been as successful with *Oklahoma!* as with its previous releases, such as "The Merry Widow" and "The Student Prince." While Nelson Eddy makes an ideal Curly and the other principals are entirely capable, the recording technicians have definitely missed the boat. The soloists have been placed right

on top of the microphones, and while every word of Hammerstein's clever lyrics are clearly understood, the intriguing orchestrations of Richard Rodgers are practically lost. In such numbers as *Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'* and *The Surrey with the Fringe on the Top* this deficiency is nothing less than a calamity! As we listened to this recording we had the impression throughout that the singers were standing right before us and that the orchestra was down the hall somewhere in another room. If one wishes to learn the words of the lyrics, this is fine; but if one wishes to have the feeling that he is listening to a stage performance of *Oklahoma!* it is pretty disconcerting.

Anna Russell Sings? (Advice on Song Selections for Concert Singers). Anna Russell (comédienne) accompanied by Harry Dworkin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4594) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *La Cantatrice Scuelante* — Canto dolcemente pipe; *I Love the Spring*; *Da, Nyet, Da, Nyet* (Russian Folk Song); *The Prince of Philadelphia*—Ah, Lover!; *Schlumph*; *Je n'ai pas la plume de ma tante*; *My Heart Is Red*; *I Gave My Love a Cherry*; *Schreechenrauf*.

If you have read the above heading casually, go back and read it again. Now you will have some idea of just what you will be in for when you hear this record. This recording was taken from the now memorable recital which Miss Russell gave at Town Hall on 13 January 1952; we thought it excruciatingly funny.

You will have a lot of fun playing this record for your friends. Miss Russell trips her way through *I Love the Spring* ("British—pure but dull"), *Je n'ai pas la plume de ma tante* and *Schlumph* (for singers with tremendous artistry but no voice), *My Heart Is Red* (Contemporary music for tone deaf singers), *Ah, Lover!* (For loud singers with no brains), and so on.

Needless to say, Miss Russell writes her own music.

Cherubini: La Liberta a Nice. (Sung in Italian). Rita McKerrow (soprano) and Hilda Alexander (contralto) accompanied by Paul Hamburger (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-33) \$5.95.

Erna Berger Recital. Erna Berger (soprano) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7060) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Semele*—Oh, sleep! why dost thou leave me? (Handel); *Exsultate, jubilate*, K. 165 (Mozart); *Lachen und Weinen*, Op. 59, No. 4, and *An die Nachtigall*, Op. 98, No. 1 (Schubert); *Geheimnis*, Op. 71, No. 3 and *Das Mädchen spricht*, Op. 107, No. 3 (Brahms); (3) *Songs from Hamlet*, Op. 67 (R. Strauss); *Pantomime and Clair de lune* and *Pierrot* and *Apparition* (Debussy).

All of the music on one of these discs and some on the second falls into the category of esoterica. The cycle of thirteen duets, *La Liberta a Nice*, by

Luigi Cherubini is unusual, if a bit on the monotonous side. Better than thirty minutes of Cherubini who, while a good workman, was seldom inspired, is a lot to take. This, coupled with Metastasio's turgid poetry, full of high sounding phrases and artificial emotion, makes the record one for specialists. The cycle was written in 1793 outside Paris, where Cherubini had taken refuge from the Revolution. Rita McKerrow and Hilda Alexander display well-trained and pleasant voices. Paul Hamburger's accompaniments are given due prominence. Lyrichord's recording is good, but the omission of the texts and translation is inexcusable.

Miss Berger's "recital" is another of those curious mixtures one encounters occasionally on LP's. Handel, Mozart, Brahms, Schubert, Strauss and Debussy! Buried away among all this is the Motet *Exsultate, jubilate* K. 165 which is somewhat a curious circumstance; but perhaps it is just as well for, while the singing is exquisite, the recording is something less than exquisite—it is dull and the use of a piano accompaniment is deplorable. The Strauss *Hamlet* Songs are curious and did not impress this reviewer. And as for Brahms, Handel, Schubert and Debussy: Miss Berger is a more than sufficient artist to encompass the divergent styles.

The recording throughout is lustreless and is further distinguished by a curious muddy quality. Michael Raucheisen is an able accompanist but has been relegated to the background by unsympathetic engineers. Interesting notes and complete texts are supplied.

W.

Schubert Song Recital. Herman Schey (bass-baritone) accompanied by Marguerite Reyners (piano). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1009) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Wohin?*; *Ungeduld*; *Eifersucht und Stolz*; *Erstarrung*; *Die Post*; *Die Krähe*; *Rückblick*; *Frühlingstraum*; *Wanderer an den Mond*; *Lied im Grünen*; *Im Frühling*; *Der Kreuzzug*; *Der Musensohn*; *Gott im Frühling*; *Totengräber-Weise*.

This reviewer remembers the first HMV disc he ever owned. It was in 1927 and the record in question contained the *Serenata* and *Finch' han dal vino* from "Don Giovanni." The soloist was Hermann Schey. Now, some twenty-five years later, Herr Schey turns up on a Polymusic LP disc singing three songs from *Die Schöne Mullerin*, five from *Die Winterreise* and a group of seven miscellaneous Schubert *lieder*.

Of Schey's artistry and general musicianship it can be said at once that both are of a high order. His singing of the music is traditional; there is no striving after effect—the songs are allowed to speak for themselves. This attribute is noticeable particularly in the restraint with which such songs as *Ungeduld* and *Die Post* are sung. Carelessly handled, these *lieder* can be made to sound meretricious. The other songs, such as *Der Musensohn* and *Wanderer an dem Mond* are also delivered in outstanding

fashion; outstanding for the grasp of the music and understanding of the text evinced by the singer.

Schey had a fair amount of voice when these recordings were made, and it is used with intelligence. The date of the recordings is not given, but they are certainly prior to World War II. The recording is, then, not really first class. It is on the muddy side, tubby and lacking in high frequency response.

The disc is of interest for the material and for the artistry of the performances. It is suggested, however, that the prospective purchaser hear the record before buying it, due to the aforementioned inferior tonal quality.

W.

Marian Anderson Sings Christmas Carols. Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7008) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7008) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Silent Night*; *Oh! Little Town of Bethlehem*; *Adeste Fideles*; *The First Noël*; *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*; *Cantique de Noël*; *Angel's Song*; *Hallelujah*.

Certainly no one could sing these well-beloved Christmas selections with more sympathetic reverence than Marian Anderson. It is a hard heart, indeed, that is not touched by these simple renditions. It is just too bad that Miss Anderson's lovely singing was not supported by an organ rather than a piano—even a little cottage organ would have been more appropriate than the Steinway for these selections.

Schlussus Sings (Vol. I). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9620) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Ständchen*; *Frühlingsglaube*; *Der Atlas*; *Im Frühling*; *Nachtstück*; *Die Forelle*; *Alinde*; *Die Taubenpost* (Schubert). *Denk es, o Seele*; *Verborgenheit*; *Der Gärtner*; *Heimweh* (Wolf).

Schlussus Sings (Vol. II). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9621) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Der Jüngling an der Quelle*; *Im abendrot*; *An Schwager Kronos*; *Der Lindenbaum* (Schubert). *Verschwiegene Liebe*; *Abschied*; *Er ist's* (Wolf). *Heimkehr*; *Ich liebe dich*; *Ständchen* (R. Strauss). *Wie bist du, meine Königin*; *Botschaft* (Brahms).

Decca should have the thanks of discerning music lovers for making available these two LP discs containing many of the best recordings of the late Heinrich Schlusnus which the great artist made during his prime in the thirties. Schlusnus, whose tragic death in his 65th year occurred on 19 June 1952, was certainly one of the greatest *lieder* singers of our generation. He was a great exponent of *bel canto* and was said to rafe with Battistini in that realm of artistic expression. If Schlusnus is not represented in your record library, either of these LP's will bring you fine examples of his art.

Spirituals. Camilla Williams (soprano) accompanied by Borislav Bazala (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-156) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Hold On; Poor Me; On My Journey; Talk About a Child; His Name So Sweet; When I've Done; City Called Heaven; Oh, What a Beautiful City.*

The brilliant young Negro operatic and concert soprano, Camilla Williams, has selected the spirituals that have proved most popular with her audiences for this new LP disc. She sings them with feeling, and her nearly perfect diction brings their full meaning to her listeners.

Strauss: Der lustige Krieg (abridged). (Sung in German). Soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl von Pausperl. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20600) \$5.95.

If you are a Strauss operetta fan (*Die Fledermaus, Der Zigeunerbaron*, etc.), you will certainly get a great kick out of the present abridged recording of *Der lustige Krieg* (The Merry War). *Der lustige Krieg*, while practically unknown in this country, was a great success when it was first produced in Vienna in 1881 and has continued a favorite in Middle Europe ever since. Its comical plot has to do with a war that was started between the states of Massa and Genoa because the rulers of these principalities had both engaged the same ballerina and neither of them would agree to give her up.

The present recording is blessed with a fine group of principals and a good chorus and orchestra, the whole under the able direction of Karl von Pausperl. The diction of the singers is such that those having only a fair knowledge of German should follow the plot easily. The reproduction throughout is first-rate.

PIANO



Brahms: Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24. Eugene Istomin (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2211) \$4.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. One side, and **Schumann: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 14** ("Concert sans orchestre"). Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1147) \$5.95.

Rachmaninoff: Variations on a Theme by Chopin, Op. 22. Robert Goldsand (piano). Coupled with **Liszt: (6) Grandes Etudes de Paganini** (TNR Aug. '49). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1149) \$5.95.

The vast number of records that are being released each month makes it impossible for us to consider each one individually in the space that is available. The best that we can do with a group of piano recordings of established compositions as mentioned above is to list them so that our readers

will be aware of the fact that they are available. We have carefully listened to each recording and we can state that both the playing and the reproduction is quite satisfactory.

Fauré: (6) Nocturnes. Emma Boynet (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7520) \$5.95.

Of the thirteen Nocturnes which Gabriel Fauré wrote for piano, Miss Boynet has chosen six for this LP disc. They are the three of *Opus 33; E-flat major, Op. 36; D-flat major, Op. 63; and C-sharp minor, Op. 74.* We admit that this music is new to us; we don't recall ever having heard it before. Our impression is that it is not of great importance, and at the hands of a lesser artist than Emma Boynet we would probably pass it by without another thought. However, Miss Boynet instills it with interest and makes it at least a very pleasing musical listening experience.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 22 in F, Op. 54 and Beethoven: Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 16 in G, Op. 31, No. 1.** Hugo Steurer (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7051) \$5.95.

There seems to be some interest in this country in the playing of the German pianist, Hugo Steurer; otherwise we can see no reason for the release of the present LP disc. There are certainly plenty of recorded versions of these Beethoven Sonatas; there is no need to have them played on what sounds to be a poor instrument. Perhaps the piano was all right; if so, then the German technicians did a mighty poor job.

Chopin: Etudes, Op. 25. One and one-half sides, and **Chopin: (3) Nouvelles Etudes.** Guiomar Novaes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7560) \$5.95.

It is always a joy to welcome new recordings by the brilliant Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaes—a truly great artist. On the present disc we have mature and clean playing of Chopin that any student of the Polish master might listen to with profit. Fine piano reproduction is an added feature.

Schubert: Sonata for Piano Duet in C, Op. 140 ("Grand Duo"). Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus (pianos). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5093) \$5.95.

Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 90. One side, and **Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 142.** Two sides, and **Schubert: Sonata in A, Op. 120.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-205) \$12.50.

The brilliant young European pianists, Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus, have made a great number of recordings abroad which have appeared in this country under the Westminster label—they have specialized largely in the music of Mozart and Schubert. Their recordings have been well received

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm.
g indicates 45 rpm.

over here and have won high critical acclaim. This month three more LP discs have been released containing some very interesting Schubert keyboard music, and we are very sure that the many admirers of these splendid young musicians will give these records a hearty welcome.

Bach: (15) Three-part Inventions. Lukas Foss (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9634) \$5.85.

It is nice to have these little Bach pieces so delightfully played by the brilliant young German-American composer, conductor, and pianist, Lukas Foss. We must warn, however, that this music is only for the very discerning student or the real Bach enthusiast—others will likely find it quite monotonous.

ORGAN



Cathedral Voluntaries and Processionals. E. Power Biggs, playing the Organ at Symphony Hall (Boston). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4603) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: A Trumpet Voluntary (Purcell); *Rhosymedre* (chorale-prelude) (Vaughan Williams); *Introduction and Toccata* (Walond); *Voluntary in C* ("Fanfare") (Purcell); *Melcombe* (chorale-prelude) (Parry); *Postlude on a Ground* (Murrill); *Psalm 19* ("The Heavens are telling the Glory of God") (Marcello); *Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist* (chorale-prelude) (Buxtehude); *Komm süßer Tod* (Bach); *Tu Patris and Tu devicto and Judex Crederis* (from "Te Deum") (Anon.); *Aria in E minor* (Mattheson); *Litany for the Feast of All Souls* (Schubert); *Processional for Festival Occasions* (R. Strauss).

This disc presents a new type of recorded program of organ music—new to records, hardly new to those who get to church occasionally. It will be welcome to those who have wanted a really good record of the type of music they hear on Sunday morning. Anyone else may enjoy it too, for it is music that is easier to take than a whole program of Bach, pre-Bach, or modern organ music. This disc is even recommended by Columbia as agreeable background music for reading or work!

The music presented is varied and not monotonous. There is ample opportunity in church for music that is gay and happy, and organ composers have not neglected music for such festive occasions. Some of the music has a quiet repose that cannot be duplicated by any other musical instrument or combination. Biggs has selected music which covers a wide range of time and several schools and nationalities. From Buxtehude to Vaughan Williams, this is a fine, representative collection. We will not single out any separate numbers; it is sufficient to say that the choice is excellent and nicely varied.

E. Power Biggs brings to all of this music a dignity that is befitting the title and primary purpose of an

issue such as this disc. His performances, without exception, could be reproduced at a (proper) Sunday morning service with benefit to the service. That they are absorbing listening in the home is but another facet of this organist's real ability. One may have heard flashier performances of one or two of these pieces at recitals, but none in better taste or built on more solid musical values. Biggs has at his command a fine instrument which he uses brilliantly, and Columbia has recorded it magnificently. We have, therefore, nothing but praise for this record. S.

Franck: Grande Pièce Symphonique in F-sharp minor, Op. 17. One side, and Liszt: *Variations on Bach's "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen"* and Liszt: *Cantabile*. Eduard Nies-Berger, playing the organ of the Church of the Messiah and Incarnation (Brooklyn). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1145) \$5.95.

Franck's *Grande Pièce Symphonique* is the second in the series of "Six Pièces pour Grand Orgue," written between 1860-1862. It is the first organ symphony ever written and Franck's longest work for that instrument. In three movements, the first is in sonata form, the second begins with a cantabile theme in lied-form. This is an often played excerpt and will be familiar to most folks who have heard some organ music in churches. The second movement has a contrasted allegro section and concludes with the original andante melody—a ravishing one indeed. In the finale Franck recapitulates themes and ideas presented in the preceding movements. The main theme of the first movement this time is in F-sharp major rather than F-sharp minor, resolving this cyclical work. The second side filler, *Cantabile*, came sixteen years after the *Grande Pièce Symphonique*. It is a great favorite of organists, for it is quite a masterpiece of melodic charm and harmonic richness, tinged with the Wagnerian influence of the Tristan period.

Liszt's *Variations on Weinen, Klagen* is a lesser known work which is new to most of us. Liszt wrote the variations on the basso continuo of the first part of Bach's cantata "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen, sind der Christen Tränenbrod" and of the Crucifixus of the "B Minor Mass" originally written for the organ in 1863. The composer transcribed it for the piano in 1875. It is not as brilliant nor as interesting as his famous *Ad nos* or *B-A-C-H* compositions.

Eduard Nies-Berger, born in Strasbourg, France, is best known here for his tenure as organist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He was chosen by Albert Schweitzer to be his collaborator on the monumental Schirmer edition of the chorale-preludes by J. S. Bach. This disc shows him to be a fine artist and it is doubly a pleasure to hear him use an organ with some richness of unison voices, rather than a baroque squeaker. The set was recorded on the organ of the Church of the Messiah and Incarnation, Brooklyn, N. Y., and the reproduction is excellent. S.

Old Netherlands Masters. Flor Peeters, playing the organ of the Church of St. Jans, Gouda (Netherlands). 1-12" disc (*REN-X-39) \$5.95.

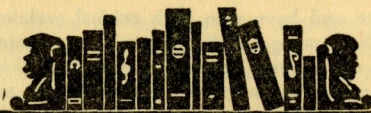
CONTENTS: *Alma Redemptoris Mater* (Dufay); *Fuga Trium Vocum* (Ockeghem); *Ein Fröhlich Wesen* (Obrecht); *Gott, Lass dich Erbarmen* (Isaac); *Canzona* (Josquin des Prés); *Ricercare* (Willeart); *Canzona* (Demonte); *Fantasia met Echowerk* (Sweelinck); *Fantasia op den 8sten Toon* (Cornet); *Preludium en Fuga in D* (van der Kerckhoven).

The important thing about this disc is the opportunity it offers to hear Flor Peeters. Mr. Peeters has been heard in person by a few folks in this country, but this disc will reach many more throughout the land. Most organists play, or are at least familiar with, Peeters compositions, and know of him as a leading light among contemporary organists. This famous Belgian master has an international reputation as an interpreter of Bach and Franck, as well as a champion of modern organ composers. As is often the combination in today's musicians, those who specialize in modern music also specialize in old music. That is true of Peeters, who has a repertoire embracing music from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. He is a rather prolific composer, and his music is considered excellent. He has published an "Anthologie of Old Netherlands Masters" in three volumes (Lemoine, Paris), so his present album presents him as no ordinary interpreter of this music.

The organ used is found in Gouda, a small town of 33,000 inhabitants known primarily for its cheese industry, situated between Rotterdam and Utrecht in the middle of the Dutch Lowlands. The Church of St. Jans is distinguished for its fifteenth century architecture and its 45 sixteenth century stained-glass windows. The organ was built in 1732-1736 by Jean Moreau of Rotterdam, has 54 ranks and numbers about 2000 pipes. It was most advanced for its period, and is noted for its excellent baroque tone quality. We found it one of the finest baroque organs yet to be heard on records, with a surprising warmth and richness, and pleasant lack of squeak and squeal—maybe Peeter's registration helps that matter. The reproduction is a model of clarity, and is unusual in that there is no echo smear—yet you hear the echo at the end of a phrase.

The music played, listed in the heading above, is interesting, especially as performed and registered by Flor Peeters. We can endorse this disc enthusiastically and recommend it to anyone interested in organ music; even the sound of the instrument is thrilling!

S.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESQ—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, HS—Haddon Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PD—Polydor, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ♂ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

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A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 11

JANUARY, ~~1952~~ 1953

By mail to any address
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RARE Records, Inc. (New York) recently sent us a copy of its catalog "Journeys into the Past," together with a dozen of its records. The records are single-face 7-inch 33-1/3 rpm discs and each disc contains one selection. The price is 79¢ each. The catalog contains one hundred records, each by a celebrity of one kind or another. Among the famous persons listed are: Sarah Bernhardt, Will Rogers, Mae West, Lillian Russell, George M. Cohan, Enrico Caruso, John McCormack, Mary Garden, Lili Lehmann, Adeline Patti, Gandhi, General Eisenhower, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, George Bernard Shaw, James Joyce, Leo Tolstoi, Gertrude Stein *et al.*

Several years of intensive search has brought rewarding results—recordings, some of them made over fifty years ago, were located and transferred to these little LP discs. On the whole we would say that the results were quite satisfactory; however, it must be remembered that many of these recordings were taken from old cylinder and very early disc records, and thus the reproduction is not to be compared with modern recording. They will be of interest particularly to collectors of recordings of great personalities and to those persons who would like to have a record by some celebrity who means something to them for nostalgic reasons—their musical value is very slight.

If you are interested, send for a copy of "Journeys into the Past." It will be sent gratis to all who request it.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 1/3 r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these (50 copies) may be had at the special price of \$3 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



R. Strauss: Josephslegende, Op. 63. Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Kurt Eichhorn. Three sides, and **R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Prelude to Act. I. And R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Prelude to Act III.** Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. And **R. Strauss: Festmarsch in E-flat, Op. 1.** Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-602) \$11.90.

A previously unrecorded major work of Richard Strauss' makes its appearance this month as Urania issues the music for the ballet *Josephslegende*. The story, with minor variations, is the Biblical one of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. The scene has been transferred to Venice (presumably for more attractive costuming) but the story is essentially the same. The work had its premiere at Paris in May of the fateful year 1914. Massine was Joseph, and the beautiful operatic prima donna Kusnietzoff mimed Potiphar's wife. Opinion was divided as to the merit of the music at the premiere, but later performances, after the war, in Berlin (1920-21) established it as "the work of a great musician."

Musically, *Josephslegende* is colorful and reminiscent of *Salomé* and *Elektra*. All the Straussian devices of divided strings and exotic orchestral effects are in evidence. The work is written for a huge orchestra, no less than 115 instrumentalists being required. With all these forces Strauss has a field day, as it were, and the scoring is both ingenious and effective. Particularly worthy of note is the scene depicting the six Turkish fighters, wherein the orchestra pictures the cracking of bones and the beating and the panting of the participants. Equally striking are the two final scenes describing Joseph's escape from prison—the amount of sound and its color are amazing.

The Munich State Opera Orchestra under Kurt Eichorn plays the complex score in fine fashion, realizing all the varied effects like the veterans they

are. The fourth side is devoted to two *Rosenkavalier* preludes (superbly played, incidentally) and a bit of Strauss *curiosa*, a *Festmarsch* Op. 1, written in 1876 when Richard was a lad of twelve. Of little merit musically, it still is amazing as the work of so young a boy. Urania's recording is first-class throughout. W.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3 in C, Op. 72a.

One side, and **Beethoven: Coriolan Overture in C, Op. 62.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. And **Beethoven: Egmont, Op. 84—Overture.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8164) \$4.98.

(6) Italian Operatic Overtures. Orchestra of Berlin Civic Opera conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7057) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Aida*; *Forza del Destino* (Verdi); *William Tell*; *Barber of Seville* (Rossini); *Don Pasquale*; *Daughter of the Regiment* (Donizetti).

(4) Rossini Overtures. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-358) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *William Tell*, *La Gazza Ladra*, *La Scala di Seta*, *Semiramide*.

Recordings of Overtures certainly must be popular, if one is to judge by the number of them that are continually being released. Here are three LP's, each containing several of them—all three are of good quality. We particularly recommend the Urania disc, the second of the three listed above, as an excellent value.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 7.

Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-635) \$5.95.

The Danish State Radio Orchestra has just completed a tour of the United States where they appeared in some forty concerts, being enthusiastically welcomed everywhere. This fine orchestra is becoming widely known, having already established a firm reputation in Europe. Much the same could be said of the Danish composer, Carl Nielsen, whose music is suddenly coming to light in this country after being overlooked in the preoccupation with Sibelius' works. The German occupation during the last war, which stopped anything from coming out of Denmark, may have contributed to our not finding out about Nielsen until a couple of decades after his death (in 1931).

The *Symphony No. 1* is the third symphony of Nielsen's to enter our record catalogs. We enjoyed it more than No. 3 "Espaniva" or No. 4 "Inextinguishable." It is a direct work, with good material and interesting use of it. The style owes something to Brahms (whom Nielsen greatly admired) yet it is

typically Scandinavian. Everything is precise and sharply defined—no sentimentality—and the themes have a national feeling. It is significant that Nielsen himself always refused to decry this symphony as an immature work; he knew that it was masterly within the limits of his capacity at the time of life when it was written, that it expressed (and expresses still) exactly what he felt at that time. There is striving for individuality which to our ears today is certainly not offensive. Much of the work is a play between two keys, G minor and C major, and Nielsen achieves some powerful effects with this opposition. Most persons will find this pleasant and interesting music; it is certainly no atonal monster, and for this reason should find an acceptance with audiences. The works of Carl Nielsen will probably appear with some frequency on the programs of our symphony orchestras. This recording will give you a good introduction to the man's art, not only for the music itself, but also by virtue of an excellent performance and splendid reproduction. S.

Villa-Lobos: Erosion ("Origin of the Amazon River"). One side, and **Dello Joio: Symphony** ("The Triumph of St. Joan"). Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4615) \$5.45.

This is the first in a series of records on which The Louisville Orchestra will present distinguished works commissioned by it. The Louisville Orchestra allots some of the money assigned to it by the city fund for the arts to commission new works, and has so far produced some outstanding pieces. The Louisville Orchestra has a small budget, a short season, and its members depend, for the greater part of their income, on other sources; therefore many of the fifty members are teachers, businessmen and businesswomen. It is a great credit to them and to their conductor, Robert Whitney, that the orchestra is such a fine group. It contains some expert instrumentalists, and their ensemble is good. You will find this disc quite amazing, and it is very well recorded too.

The eminent Brazilian composer, Heitor Villa-Lobos, has written a score prefaced by a descriptive legend about the sun and the moon, and their unfulfilled desire to marry, with the result that the tears of the moon gave the origin of the Amazon River. The music does not follow the text too closely; the work just emerges as another rich fabric by this distinctive composer. It is music that provides diversion without a known program, and the admirers of Villa-Lobos will find it rather tame compared to some of his scores.

Norman Dello Joio's symphony depicts Joan of Arc in her three phases: first as the simple and dedicated maid of Domremy, who hears heavenly voices commanding her to rid France of the English; secondly, as the warrior leading the troops against the aliens

and then attending the coronation of the King of France; and finally as the martyr, burned at the stake as a heretic, and at the last achieving eternal glory as a Saint. As you may have gathered, much of this is heroic music and scored rather loud and heavy. It is a prevalently noisy score, and we would have appreciated more relief and contrast. It is, however, a well constructed score, and has many moments of solid grandeur; the work as a whole is not too dissonant. Whitney and his orchestra play the music with generous enthusiasm. Together, these works provide a disc of representative contemporary music.

S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 9 in D minor. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7602) \$11.90.

Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum, with Margaret Ritchie (soprano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-618) \$5.95.

Mahler had an uneasy feeling about writing a ninth symphony; Beethoven and Bruckner died after completion of their ninth symphonies. Actually Mahler's ninth symphonic work was *Das Lied von der Erde*, and his "Tenth" actually exists in sketches, understandable but to himself. The *Ninth*, though completed, can hardly be called finished in Mahler's sense, for it did not undergo the extensive revisions he always applied to his works. The *Ninth* manifests in its entirety all phases of the mental and spiritual development, the searching, finding, losing again, struggling, happiness and suffering of the artist-existence of this great master. The first movement is considered perhaps the greatest music Mahler ever wrote, for it is the beginning of something entirely new, both in style and expression, rather than the culmination of what he wrote earlier. The first and fourth movements are slow movements, with a coarse waltz and a Rondo Burlesque for the middle movements—an unusual arrangement. As we are not familiar with this symphony, we can only state that Horenstein, known to us for some fine recordings in the past, plays this music with a strong conviction, and succeeds in putting it over pretty well. The Vienna Symphony is no paragon of orchestral accuracy and finish at times, but they strive valiantly. The reproduction is satisfactory.

This recording of the Mahler *Fourth* is a fine example of London's best reproduction, with good percussion and nice all-around quality. It is also a highly competent statement of the music, but it does not displace the Bruno Walter reading in our affections (*C-ML-4031), even if the reproduction is superior. Walter has, obviously, a warmer and more knowing approach to the subject, and we feel Mahlerites will readily agree with that opinion. The *Fourth* is easily the most accessible and most readily enjoyable of this master's symphonies, a work which

anyone can enjoy. It is, in a sense, lighter than his others, but is no less a masterpiece. It deals with happier subjects than we often find in Mahler's music, and the short fourth movement is a superb setting of a poem for soprano solo. It is a gem in itself. Walter's soprano, Desi Halban, is a shade better than Margaret Ritchie. For reproduction, it's London; for the best reading, it's Walter. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-631) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-629) \$5.95.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-638) \$5.95.

This trio of London LP's will find stiff competition from other manufacturers; the Schumann from an interpretive angle, the Beethoven from an economic angle. It may be said at once that those who prefer London reproduction can purchase any of these discs and be assured of a good performance, very well recorded. Those who want comparative values will be advised to consider first the Beethoven discs. Carl Schuricht is a top-rank conductor in Europe, and many of his records are excellent. These Beethoven discs attest to his sterling qualities, and the Vienna Philharmonic plays magnificently. Here is Beethoven with a relaxed, Continental feeling, yet beautifully phrased and precisely played. The only drawback to these discs is an economic one. The *First Symphony* on two sides of a London 10" disc compared to other versions on one side of a 12" disc is the disadvantage. Also, the *First* is used as a filler for several albums of the *Ninth Symphony*. The *Second Symphony* appeared just last month on one side of a Columbia 12" disc, coupled with the *Fourth Symphony* (*C-ML-4596). London places the *Second* on two sides of a 12" disc—you pay more for one London symphony than for two Columbia symphonies. And we found, last month, that this Columbia disc of two symphonies was mighty good music under Bruno Walter's baton. So the result is simply this: artistically London has something excellent to offer in these Beethoven symphonies, economically they are a questionable value. From a purely critical angle we would give London just about top place on these discs.

The Schumann *Second Symphony* is another story. The other two LP discs of this work are, like London, on a 12" discs, both sides. But the other two are, to our ears, better Schumann. Schuricht has not the Vienna Philharmonic this time, and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra doesn't seem to be on the beam for this job. The strings are noticeably wiry in tone and not perfectly accurate. Stokowski still leads the

list (*V-LM-1194), and we have a high regard for Eugen Papst and the Munich Philharmonic's statement of the music (*ME-MG-10082), although you may not find the reproduction equal to Stokely's disc. We recommend Stokowski on this work over London from the interpretative standpoint. S.

American Music for String Orchestra. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40001) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Fantasy on a Hymn* by Justin Morgan (Canning); *Arioso for String Orchestra* (Mennini); *Suite in E for String Orchestra* (Foote).

This LP disc contains three American works for string orchestra that are certainly worthy of being recorded. We are indebted to Howard Hanson, who has probably done more than any other conductor to bring American music to the attention of the music loving public, and to Mercury Record Corp. for making this fine disc available.

The first selection is Thomas Canning's *Fantasy on a Hymn* by Justin Morgan, which dates from 1944 and was first performed under Dr. Hanson's direction at a symposium of American music at the Eastman School of Music in the fall of 1946. Mr. Canning was born at Brookville, Pennsylvania, in 1911 and studied at Oberlin Conservatory and the Eastman School of Music. He is presently on the faculty of the latter institution. His *Fantasy* is based on *Amanda*, a hymn tune by an early American composer, Justin Morgan (1747-1798). As one listens to this wistful and delicate work, it might well be that Vaughn Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* would come to mind. If you are in the mood for such music, lend your ear to this fine recording.

Louis Mennini (1920-) is a colleague of Thomas Canning on the faculty of the Eastman School of Music and, like Canning, was born in Pennsylvania (Erie), and studied first at Oberlin Conservatory, completing his musical education at the Eastman School. His *Arioso for String Orchestra*, the second selection on the present disc, dates from 1947 and was given its first performance during that year by the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra under Dr. Hanson's direction. Since that time it has appeared on the programs of several important symphony orchestras, among them the Philadelphia Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington. In speaking of his *Arioso*, Mr. Mennini has said, "It reflects my interest in the music of the 16th and early 17th centuries—in particular the preparation of dissonance and the arrangement of vertical sonorities. Yet the music's style is completely contemporary in its harmonic and rhythmic idiom. The music begins with a choral ostinato which reappears throughout its course. All of the ensuing material is in essence a spinning out of this basic idea."

Arthur Foote (1853-1937) was a Boston musician whose entire training was gained in the United States. While his output was considerable, he is largely remembered for his *Night Pieces for Flute and Strings* and the present *Suite* which has been so nicely recorded under Dr. Hanson's direction. This *Suite* dates from 1907 and was given its first performance by the Boston Symphony under the direction of Max Fiedler. It abounds in tender lyric melodies and is certainly quite delightful to listen to. We enjoyed it fully and we are sure that many of our readers will find it attractive.

This fine LP disc contains American music that deserves to be heard by our discerning music lovers. R.

Weber: Aufforderung zum Tanz, Op. 65. One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Danza della ore. Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden) conducted by Hugo Rignold. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4019) \$2.50.

Suppé: Poet and Peasant—Overture. One side, and **Suppé: Light Cavalry**—Overture. Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4020) \$2.50.

Suppé: Beautiful Galatea—Overture. One side, and **Suppé: Jolly Robbers**—Overture. Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4021) \$2.50.

Moussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain. One side, and **Borodin: In the Steppes of Central Asia.** RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4022) \$2.50.

Grieg: Sigurd Jorsalfar—Homage March. One side, and **Grieg: Wedding Day at Troldhaugen, Op. 65, No. 6.** Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4023) \$2.50.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Wedding March, Scherzo, Nocturne. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4025) \$2.50.

Dukas: L'Apprenti sorcier. One side, and **Berlioz: Le Carnaval Romain Overture, Op. 9.** Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4027) \$2.50.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Anvil Chorus and **Bizet: Carmen**—Micaëla's Air. One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—Brindisi and **Puccini: La Bohème**—Si, mi chiamano Mimi. Camarata and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4028) \$2.50.

Here is a group of LP discs that have been recently released by Decca in its new moderately priced 10-inch 4000 series. All of the recordings have been dubbed from European masters. For the most part the selections are those that are generally popular here in America and the performances and

the reproduction are quite satisfactory. We would say that each of these LP discs is a very good value.

Bruckner: Symphony in D minor, Op. Posth ("Youth Symphony"). Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henk Spruit. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1142) \$5.95.

Anton Bruckner, the "rustic genius" as Werner Wolff so aptly calls him, is a great favorite with most Central European audiences and also with a small but fervent group in this country. His nine monumental symphonies form the backbone of his output, and he also wrote settings for Psalms, three Masses, a *Te Deum* and a small amount of chamber music. All of his compositions are deeply imbued with genuine religious feeling (the *Ninth Symphony* is dedicated to God) and, for contrast, there is a degree of earthiness in many parts of his music, notably in the wonderful scherzo he wrote for his extended works.

This symphony, however, falls outside the main body of his music. The exact date of its composition, according to Werner Wolff (author of the only biography of Bruckner in English), has not been definitely established—one critic saying 1863, another 1869. Wolff inclines towards the earlier date from a study of the score. Bruckner himself, when the score was "discovered" in 1895 (he had apparently forgotten its existence) did not seem too happy about the find, for he wrote on the first page "Symphony No. 0—not at all valid (only an attempt)."

The recorded performance tends to bear out Bruckner's wish to suppress the work for, even though there are moments that presage the more mature works, *Symphony No. 0* is often dull, giving the impression of mere note-stringing. It is a far cry from this youthful attempt to the majesty and glory of the 4th and 9th Symphonies.

Henk Spruit and the Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra play this so-called *Youth Symphony* with spirit and understanding. The brass section of the orchestra is particularly fine and the general tone and ensemble playing is on a high level. All this, however, can do little to release the earth-bound score. Bruckner knew what he was doing when he marked it as he did. The record will be of interest to students and collectors of *curiosa*—hardly a large market. Fair recorded sound. W.

Handel—arr. Harty: The Royal Fireworks Suite. One side, and **Clarke—arr. Wood: Trumpet Voluntary.** And **Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust**—Dance of the Sylphs, Minuet of the Will o' the Wisp, Hungarian March. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-620) \$4.95.

Of particular interest on this LP disc is the recording of the 17th century English composer Jeremiah Clark's *Trumpet Voluntary*, which until

more or less recently had been attributed to Purcell. There has been a small but insistent demand for this little piece and so it is nice to be able to say that it is now available in a well-recorded version. We might also mention that Beinum's version of Handel's *The Royal Fireworks Suite* is top-notch. In fact, this is a pretty nice little record.

CONCERTO



Thomson: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra.

Luigi Silva (violoncello) with the Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. One side, and **Thomson: The Mother of Us All** (Suite for Orchestra). Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4468) \$5.45.

The enterprising Werner Janssen again turns to American music for a vital recording of genuine substance. Virgil Thomson is fast becoming one of our best known and most liked serious composers. Possibly one reason is that his music is pleasant as well as original; it can be understood and appreciated by most persons on a first hearing. The 'cello concerto here recorded is an example of interesting, worthwhile, and pleasing music. It is in three movements; the first titled *Rider on the Plains* is a loping, lilting, open-air piece in six-eight time in classical sonata form with two cadenzas for the solo instrument. The middle movement, entitled *Variations on a Southern Hymn*, is based on a hexatonic and modal tune of Scottish cast, very common in the South during the earlier part of the Nineteenth Century. The finale is called *Children's Games* and is a rondo on original themes, during which two familiar quotations appear briefly. One of these is from the hymn *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*; the other is from a piano sonata by Beethoven. We found the whole work quite absorbing; it is not supposed to be a keystone of the repertoire, but rather an interesting diversion, which it is.

The suite for orchestra is drawn from the opera *The Mother of Us All*, composed by Thomson in 1946 on a text written for him by Gertrude Stein. The play, which presents a panorama of Nineteenth Century political life in the United States, is centered on Susan B. Anthony. The suite is in four movements, three of which are instrumental sections from the opera. The first is called *Prelude*, the overture; next is a movement called *Cold Weather*, an intermezzo about a windy day at the approach of winter. The third section, called *Hymns*, is an orchestral transcription of the wedding hymn and of the funeral music which occurs in the opera. The final movement, the *Prelude to Act I, Scene 2*, represents a political meeting, with parades, speeches, disputes, solemnities, and jokes.

The recording of both these works was done in the presence of the composer, so we assume that these

readings are authoritative. They contain the vitality which Janssen brings to all his work these days, and are splendidly played and reproduced. S.

Brahms: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 83. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-628) \$5.95.

For the great *Second Concerto* of Brahms, London has come up with a pair of artists who prove the best yet in a phonographic edition of this music. Backhaus, a venerable pianist with a reputation for his Beethoven, was never better than he is in the present work. His is a large, broadly paced reading which reveals the dimensions of the music in the grand manner. And this is accomplished without distortion or excesses. His accompaniment is handled with near-perfection by Carl Schuricht, and the playing of the Vienna Philharmonic is typical of their best work. It is a performance which everyone who loves this work will admire greatly. London has supplied its best reproduction to round out a highly successful disc. We would give this preference over any of the three other recorded versions of the work.

For those to whom the music is unfamiliar, we would urge a hearing of the Brahms *Second Concerto*, if piano concertos appeal to them. This is one of the master's biggest and most powerful scores, written between the violin concerto and the third symphony. It is unusual in form in that it has four movements instead of the customary three; Brahms is said to have remarked ironically that the long and complex first movement was too "simpl," and he therefore added a scherzo-like second movement. The third movement contains the famous passage for solo 'cello, an expressive melody that lingers long in the mind. The finale is a sprightly and graceful affair that comes to a dazzling conclusion. It is an established favorite which well deserves its honored place in the repertoire, and you will not soon find a better performance than the present one by Backhaus and Schuricht. S.

Dvořák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104. Zora Nelsova (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-537) \$5.95.

Dvořák's *'Cello Concerto* is now available on LP discs by half a dozen different artists, including the celebrated recording by Casals. The Casals version has been re-issued on the Victor Treasury Series (*V-LCT-1026). It would probably be considered best by any group of music lovers, musicians, or critics from every standpoint except reproduction. Casals has magnificent support from Szell and the Czech Philharmonic. The two of them, Casals and Szell, offer a performance of strength and fervor. The current set by Nelsova and Krips is a romantic statement of the music, smooth, graceful, and easy flowing. We could not say it is out of keeping

with the music, for it is a beautiful statement of the music as these artists feel it. There may be some who will prefer this suave treatment—and they will also get exceedingly fine recording with this disc. Our preference remains with Casals and Szell, older reproduction notwithstanding. There is also a fine version by Piatigorsky, with Ormandy and the Philadelphia (*C-ML-4022) which is worth investigating for those who want to make comparisons of the best ones on the market.

The program notes accompanying the present disc are elaborate and quite informative; whoever wrote them knows this work like a book, and is most enthusiastic about it. The Dvořák *'Cello Concerto* is one of the really great works for this noble instrument. It contains some of Dvořák's finest writing and most masterful working of material. It is said that he composed the concerto only at Wihan's request—Wihan was a remarkable 'cellist with whom Dvořák toured Bohemia. However, there is a suggestion that when Dvořák got to America and heard Victor Herbert play a 'cello concerto with the New York Symphony Orchestra, it started the ideas for this great piece working in his mind. Although it was actually composed in the States, the work may be regarded as a genuine Czech composition. S.

Handel: (4) Concertos for Organ and Orchestra.

Eva Hoelderlin, playing the organ at the Luthern Church, Stuttgart-Waihingen (Germany) with the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7802) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 13 in F* ("Cuckoo and Nightingale"); *Concerto No. 14 in A*; *Concerto No. 15 in D minor*; *Concerto No. 16 in F*.

Having issued the complete Op. 4 and Op. 7, consisting of six concertos each, Vox now rounds out this great accomplishment with the third set of organ concertos. This set, without opus numbers, usually are called Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16. Number 13 is best known by its colloquial title "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale" and has been previously recorded. The others appear for the first time on discs. With the exception of No. 15, these concertos borrow a lot of material from other works which Handel wrote, mostly movements from his *Concerti Grossi*. No. 14 is an arrangement of the *Concerto Grosso*, Op. 6, No. 11 for strings and continuo; Nos. 13 and 16 borrow material here and there from various works. No. 15 consists of only two movements. It has an accompaniment of strings and continuo. The date of its composition is unknown and it appears to be an original work throughout.

For this album, Vox engaged a different organist than in the two previous sets, and recorded it on a different organ. The results are just as good as before, and we would judge from hearing the set that the music is performed with a style and manner

entirely becoming the music and its period. All of these organ concertos are pleasant listening, not supposed to be heavy going, and not intended by Handel to do anything more than entertain an audience between sections of an oratorio performance. We would suggest them to most persons, other than students of the music, as little more than high-class background music. To have all the Handel organ concertos uniformly recorded is, of course, another landmark in the record catalogs. Their practical use in the home is for innocuous entertainment. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: The Sonatas for Violin and Piano.

Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 5-12" discs in album (*D-DX-150) \$25.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 1 in D, Op. 12, No. 1; Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 12, No. 2; Sonata No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 12, No. 3; Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23; Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"); Sonata No. 6 in A, Op. 30, No. 1; Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2; Sonata No. 8 in G, Op. 30, No. 3; Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96.*

Decca has just released a de luxe edition of the ten Beethoven Sonatas for Violin and Piano played by Joseph Fuchs and Artur Balsam. The five 12-inch LP discs are housed in a substantial album with a booklet containing the complete miniature scores; thus one may follow the music as it is performed by these distinguished artists. This is a limited edition and each album is numbered and is autographed by the players. This item is modestly priced at \$25—less than the records would sell for individually.

Messrs. Fuchs and Balsam are primarily interested in Beethoven's music, and their aim is to present it as the great master wrote it with strength and incision. This they do with impeccable technique. Never do they let their playing outshine the composer's music—no superficial effects are ever in evidence. In these recordings we have fine intelligent playing splendidly recorded. Students of Beethoven will doubtless welcome this outstanding set of discs.

CHORAL



Schutz: The Nativity. (Sung in German). Soloists, chorus and Scarlatti Orchestra of Naples conducted by Franco Caracciolo. 1-12" disc (CSM-CLPS-1034) \$5.95.

Bach: Missa Brevis No. 3 in G minor. (Sung in Latin). One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Sanctus No. 3 in D minor.** Lotte Wolf-Matthaeus (alto); Werner Hohmann (tenor); Franz Kelch (bass); Swabian Choral Singers and Tonstudio Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (REN-X-46) \$5.95.

Heinrich Schutz, who is beginning to be well

represented on records, is one of the real giants of the pre-Bach era in music. He was born just one hundred years before Johann Sebastian and studied under the great Giovanni Gabrieli at San Marco in Venice. The Latin gift for expressiveness, coupled with his Germanic attention to detail, gave to his music a seriousness of purpose and eloquence that, up to that time, were not in evidence. This recording of his setting of the story of the Nativity combines these features of his art in impressive fashion. The soloists on this disc are all good; especially fine is Nicola Filacuridi who delivers the moving recitatives in splendid fashion. The chorus is small, but makes up in enthusiasm what it lacks in numbers. The Scarlatti Orchestra of Naples leaves much to be desired, particularly the brass section; but the over-all effect, somehow, is mighty impressive—a tribute, no doubt, to Schutz' towering genius. Colosseum's recording is easy to listen to, and the balance between soloists, chorus and orchestra is well maintained.

The two works of Bach released by Renaissance completes the set of three *Missae breves* and *Sancti*. There is little that can be said concerning these works that was not noted in the review of the release of the first two *Masses* (TNR Sept. '52). Dr. Grischkat and his soloists, chorus and orchestra are thoroughly familiar with the essentials for a good performance of Bach and govern themselves accordingly. The result, when coupled with Renaissance's uniformly good recorded sound, is decidedly worth while. W.

Mozart: Mass No. 20, Requiem, K. 626. Robert Shaw Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 4-7" discs in box (6V-WDM-1712) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1712) \$5.72.

This is the fourth and by all means the best recording of Mozart's last work, the *Requiem in D Minor*. As mentioned in a previous review (TNR Jan '51) this *Requiem* is a difficult work both to perform and to appraise. Mozart was a sick, a dying man when he wrote it. His inspiration, probably the greatest and most unusual in all music history, was disturbed by the "mysterious" cloaked man who brought the commission for the work—his sick body and feverish mind connected the projected *Requiem* with his approaching death—small wonder, then, that a few portions of the piece reflect the distraught state of affairs. Coupled with this, of course, are doubts as to how much of the *Requiem*, as we know it, is Sussmyer's and how closely he followed Mozart's intentions in completing the score.

The complete work has been recorded here on one twelve inch disc—other recordings have been on two ten inch records. What is more, this has been accomplished without any appreciable loss of quality. The Shaw Chorale and a quartet of unnamed soloists sing the music in impeccable fashion. There is an astonishing degree of feeling for style

and expression in their performance. Robert Shaw directs with considerable insight, and his approach to the work struck this reviewer as logical, if a bit unique. It is, essentially, a compromise between the purely operatic and the conventional liturgical manner. This method lends heightened interest to such portions as the *Tuba mirum* and *Dies irae* and supplies the necessary contrast for the quieter and more contemplative sections. Needless to say, his chorus is superbly trained. The orchestra plays well too, making the performance a knowing and convincing one. Certainly this is one of the best Mozart recordings made in this country where Mozart stylists don't exactly flourish. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 31 ("Der Himmel lacht, die Erde jubilieret"). (Sung in German). Anny Felbermayer (soprano), Waldemar Kmentt (tenor), Walter Berry (bass), Akademie Choir and Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. One and one-half sides, and **Bach: (7) Easter Chorales**. Soloists of the Akademie Choir with Kurt Rapf (organ). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-512) \$5.95.

K. P. E. Bach: Magnificat in D. (Sung in Latin). Dorothea Siebert (soprano), Hilde Rossl-Majdan (alto), Waldemar Kmentt (tenor), Hans Braun (bass), Akademie Choir and Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. Three sides, and **K. P. E. Bach—arr. Steinberg: Concerto for Orchestra in D.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-516/7) \$11.90.

Two releases by the Bach Guild feature works by Johann Sebastian Bach and his somewhat less gifted son, Karl Philip Emanuel. The first disc is devoted to a performance of the *Cantata No. 31* "Der Himmel lacht" by Felix Prohaska, soloists and the hard working Akademiechor and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. Nothing need be said concerning the music here—Bach's inspiration was at full tide when he wrote this cantata for Easter Morning. Prohaska is an exceptionally able conductor who has a thorough understanding of the idiom, and he directs a sterling performance. The soloists, with the exception of the glorious-voiced Felbermayer, belong in the category of adequate but relatively undistinguished singers who show some grasp of style but little inspiration. The *Seven Easter Chorales* are ably sung by soloists from the Akademiechor, while the choir itself is superb, especially the basses. Appropriate organ accompaniments are supplied by Kurt Rapf. All the music on this fine disc is recorded for the first time.

With the *Magnificat in D*, a different world is entered—one passes from the *baroque* to the *galant* and the difference is, at times, startling. Essentially the same forces are employed with the substitution of Dorothea Siebert for Anny Felbermayer and the

addition of Hilde Rossl-Majdan. Miss Siebert sings in a way that, while not distressingly bad, still makes one wish the substitution had not been made. Her vocal method leaves her short of breath and the exceptionally fine recording enables one to hear her heavy breathing only too clearly. Rossl-Majdan is competent.

The fourth side of this set is concerned with Max Steinberg's tasteful arrangement of a "concerto" by K. P. E. Bach. The work, alternatively known as the *Suite in D* is here arranged as a *concerto grosso* and has enjoyed considerable popularity in its present dress. The performance by Dr. Prohaska and his musicians is a good one, although the essential sterility of K. P. E.'s imagination is apparent.

The recording ranks with the best on LP today. For reasons best known to themselves, Bach Guild have seen fit to press the *Magnificat* in manual sequence. Excellent notes are supplied. W.

Gregorian Chant: The Requiem Mass. Pius X Choir of the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart directed by Mother Josephine Morgan, R.S.C.J. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-PX-1) \$4.75.

Missa de Angeles No. 8 and Credo Chant No. 1. One side, and **Missa cum Jubilo No. 9 and Credo Chant No. 3.** Pius X Choir of the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart directed by Mother Josephine Morgan, R.S.C.J. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-PX-2) \$4.75.

Holy Saturday Exultet One side, and **Sacred Polyphony.** Immaculate Conception Seminary Schola, Darlington (New Jersey), directed by Joseph A. Murphy. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-DS-1) \$4.75.

There is very little liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church available on LP records, and thus these three discs, recently released by the Gregorian Institute of America, are of prime interest. We are glad to report that the choirs who have made these recordings are excellent and are well qualified to sing this unique and very difficult music. The recordings have been very faithfully achieved.

Catholic Hymns. St. Mary's Seminary Choir, Roland Park, Baltimore directed by Rev. John C. Selner. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-CH-1) \$4.75.

CONTENTS: *Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All; Soul of My Saviour; Ave Maria, O Maiden, O Mother; Hail, Holy Queen, Enthroned Above; Jesu, By That Shuddering Dread; O, God of Loveliness; O Sacred Head; and Alleluia, Alleluia, Let the Holy Anthem Rise.*

Only occasionally do we find a recording of Catholic Hymns and seldom do we find such a fine selection as those recorded on this little LP disc. They have been reverently and beautifully sung by a splendid choir composed of seminarians from St. Mary's Seminary, Roland Park, Baltimore.

Schubert: Mass in E-flat. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7840) \$5.95. (TNR Sept. '50).

Vox has re-issued this Mass, which "W" "unreservedly recommended" in the September 1950 issue of THE NEW RECORDS, on a single 12-inch LP disc instead of on two 10-inch LP's. Neither quality nor quantity has diminished in the transfer.

OPERA

Mozart: Zaide (complete). (Sung in German). Mattawilde Dobbs (soprano); Hughes Cuénod, Joseph Peyron, John Riley (tenors); Bernard Demigny (basso); L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Paris conducted by Rene Leibowitz. 2-12" discs in album (*PLM-PR-901/2) \$12.55.

A study of Mozart's composing methods reveals at least two interesting cases where he wrote a work only to abandon it and follow it up with an expanded and vastly superior version. One of these cases was the development of the music from *Thamos* into *Die Zauberflöte* and even more remarkable is the transformation of *Zaide* into *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. In fact, it is reasonably certain that *Zaide* was originally titled *Der Serail*, the name *Zaide* being the idea of the publisher André, who printed the unfinished score.

There are only two acts, no recitatives and no overture to *Zaide*. It consists of fifteen numbers; solos, duets, trios, a quartet and several *melodramas* (spoken dialogue with musical "punctuation"). Musically there is much of absorbing interest: the wonderful E major trio that closes the first act, *O selige Wonne*; and a striking quartet in the second act, wherein Mozart already shows that amazing ability to create characters in music, an ability that flowered in the later great operas.

Hughes Cuénod sings the music of Gomatz, the hero, in most acceptable fashion—stylistically he is virtually perfect. Equally fine performances are given by Bernard Demigny as Allizam, and Joseph Peyron as Osmín. Mattawilda Dobbs adds to the laurels she gained in the recording of the complete *Les Pecheurs des Perles* (TNR May '52). Her fresh, youthful soprano is ideally suited to the part and her singing of the beautiful *Ruhe sanft* is one of the highlights of the recording.

M. Leibowitz directs the production in a sincere and musicianly fashion. Phrasing, coloring and tempi are all sane and suitable. He certainly understands his Mozart, for there is nothing in his treatment of the score at which anyone could cavil.

Polymusic has achieved very nice recorded sound; there is an intimate quality about it that is very becoming. In addition Polymusic has, with unusual understanding, furnished detailed notes and an excellent libretto with a new translation. Both notes

and translation are the work of Dr. William B. Ober, whose scholarly annotations have distinguished some of the WCFM releases. The album is recommended for all lovers of Mozart and for all who like to stray from the beaten path. W.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier (complete). (Sung in German). Viorica Ursuleac, Adele Kern (sopranos); Georgine von Milinkovic (mezzo-soprano); Georg Hann (baritone); Ludwig Weber (basso) with chorus and Orchestra of the State Opera (Munich) conducted by Clemens Krauss. 4-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7774) \$24.75.

This is the second complete *Der Rosenkavalier* set, despite the age of the recording (it dates from 1944 in war-time Munich) it is quite good. As a performance it is on a par artistically with the Urania issue of a little over a year ago (TNR June '51). As a recording it is slightly less desirable due to a degree of thinness in the string tone and a certain hollowness in the bass.

The ladies are, perhaps, superior in this present set, Viorica Ursuleac having a decided edge over Margarete Baumer of the Urania performance, as the Marschallin. Mme. Ursuleac has a more opulent voice—a younger and less worn instrument that is better able to cope with the difficult score. Georgine von Milinkovic, the Octavian of this set, while having a more flexible and certainly a younger voice than Tiana Lemnitz, does not possess the artistry of the latter. Adele Kern shades the Sophie of Urania's Ursula Richter, if not always vocally, at least dramatically.

Among the men it is more difficult to choose. Both Ludwig Weber and Kurt Böhme are first rate as Baron Ochs—neither acts in too coarse a manner and both have excellent voices, Weber being a little more polished. Georg Hann is a little less subtle Faninal than his counterpart in the Urania set, Hans Loebel, but both are excellent.

There is equally little to choose from between conductors. Both Kempe (Urania) and Krauss are experienced directors, and both turn in spirited performances with only minor points of difference. Both interpretations are traditional and will undoubtedly suit most tastes.

Owners of the Urania set need not feel any qualms over the new issue and those who are prospects for a complete *Der Rosenkavalier* now have two recordings from which to choose. W.

Fioravanti: Le Cantatrici Villane (complete). (Sung in Italian). Alda Noni, Ester Orell (sopranos); Fernanda Cadoni (mezzo-soprano); Agostino Lazari (tenor); Sesto Bruscantini, Franco Calabrese (bassos); Orchestra of the Alessandro Scarlatti Society of Naples conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-12" disc (*CE-50102) \$5.95.

A delightful satire on *opera seria* is contained on this single LP issued by Cetra-Soria. *Le Cantatrici*

Villane is a little *opera buffa* written by Valentino Fioravanti (1764-1837), a composer little known outside his native Italy. He was strictly a comic opera man and wrote some fifty works in this genre of which the present example is typical and perhaps the best known. The recording was made available because of a revival in Italy prepared for the third *Premio Italia*, a festival under the auspices of Radio Italiana for presenting awards for the best European radio programs (one could do with something of the sort in this country). The score was arranged for the modern presentation by Renato Parodi and the libretto was "pruned" by Carrado Pavolini.

The cast is an accomplished one, headed by the excellent Alda Noni as Roas. Miss Noni is favorably known in this country through her many records for HMV and Cetra and her performance here is calculated to add to her already fine reputation. The part of the local *maestro*, Don Bucefalo, is sung by the veteran Sesto Bruscantini who extracts all the humor from the role without once becoming foolish. The other principal, Agostino Lazzari, turns out to be a first-rate lyric tenor who, as Carlino, gives a fine performance. Others in the cast give a good account of both themselves and the music.

Perhaps the deciding factor that makes this old opera seem real and worth while is the superb direction of the gifted Mario Rossi. Every opera he has recorded is notable for its spirit and finish (*La Cenerentola*, *Fedora* and *Guglielmo Tell* are a few that come to mind in this connection) and these characteristics are in ample evidence here.

Cetra's recording is fair, there being some curious clinks and noises in the bass that are certainly extramusical. Detailed notes and a libretto are included. W.

Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore (complete). (Sung in Italian). Alda Noni, Bruna Rizzoli (sopranos); Cesare Valletti (tenor); Afro Poli (baritone); Sesto Bruscantini (basso); Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1235) \$17.85.

Donizetti's eternally youthful contribution to the operatic repertory, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, is here given a sterling first completely recorded performance. This gem of comic operas had its first production at Milan on 12 May 1832 and was greeted enthusiastically. Donizetti himself, at the height of his powers, was inspired to dedicate *L'Elisir d'Amore* "To the Fair Sex of Milan—Who can better distill it? Who can better dispense it?" Fresh, gay, brilliant and amusing, this true gem of *opera buffa* has been a prime favorite for one hundred and twenty years. It is fascinating to look back and recall the names of famous singers who loved and sang this opera. . . . Hempel, Sembrich, Caruso, Bonci, Schipa, de Luca and Scotti to mention but a few. And on the darker side of operatic history, who can forget the fateful performance of 11 November 1920 when Caruso was

compelled, because of the onset of his fatal illness, to retire after singing the first act of *L'Elisir d'Amore*?

Cetra's cast is a first rate one. Alda Noni is a superb Norina, singing with consummate ease and real tonal beauty. She is an ideal choice vocally, for her fresh, youthful coloratura fits the part like a glove. Equally fine is the impetuous but well considered Nemorino of Cesare Valletti. This young man gives a top-flight performance in every respect. His arias *Quanto e bella* and the favorite *Una furtiva lagrima* are sung with feeling and style. Afro Poli, a seasoned veteran, is highly successful as the dashing Belcore while Sesto Bruscantini sings a Dr. Dulcamara that would be hard to equal. The tendency in this role is to over-act, to become "hammy," but Bruscantini resists all such temptations and is at once convincing and funny, without ever being silly.

Gianandrea Gavazzeni is a real find for opera lovers. Here is a young (43 years) conductor who is both musician and musicologist, in addition to being a composer! His direction is distinguished by an exceptional (in operatic conductors) regard for the score and an insistence that the singers take no liberties. The performance of orchestra and chorus is excellent, and the entire set is one that can be not only recommended, it can be urged upon all lovers of Italian opera and also on those who think they don't like opera. Hear it by all means! W.

Operatic Duets. Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7007) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7007) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *La Forza del Destino*—Solenne in quest' ora; *Don Carlo*—Io l'ho perduta!; *Otello*—Si, pel ciel marmoreo giuro!; *La Bohème*—O Mimì, tu più non torni; *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*—Au fond du temple saint.

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Patrice Munsel (soprano); Jan Peerce (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); Ezio Pinza (basso); RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Renato Cellini. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1710) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1710) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Cruda funesta smania*; *Regnava nel silenzio*; *Egli s'avvanza!* (recit.), *Sulla tomba che rinserra* (aria); *Chi me frena in tal momento?* (sextet); *Il dolce suono mi colpi di sua voce* (mad scene); *Tombe degl' avi miei* (tomb scene).

RCA Victor has selected five of the great duets for tenor and baritone and issued them on a single LP disc—they are sung with varying success by Bjoerling and Merrill. The moving *Solenne in quest' ora* from "*La Forza del Destino*" is meticulously

sung, but without any real feeling. Things improve artistically in the extended excerpt from *Don Carlo*. The passage recorded is from Act 1 and begins with the words *Io l'ho perduta* and continues to and includes the duet *Dio, che nel alma infondere*. Experience lends a hand here for Bjoerling and Merrill have sung this music many times, having taken part in the 1950 revival at the Metropolitan and subsequent performances. The tremendous duet *Si pel ciel* from Verdi's "Otello" defeats them. They reminded this reviewer (with apologies to Erik Ambler) of two young and inexperienced mice confronted by a wise old tom cat. They are vocally capable, here as elsewhere, but that is all. The duets from *La Bohème* and *Les Pêcheurs des Perles* are less demanding interpretively and come off well.

Following the highly successful *Highlights from La Bohème* (TNR Nov. '52) comes this generous sampling of arias, duets and ensembles from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This record, however, does not reach anything like the heights of the other disc for a variety of reasons. To begin with the artists are not of such high calibre; Miss Munsel, as Lucia, is beyond her depth vocally and artistically. This is noticeable in the first act air *Regnava nel silenzio* and the same weaknesses are apparent throughout her performance. Jan Peerce finds Edgardo a congenial role and makes the most of it which, incidentally, is quite a bit. Robert Merrill as Lord Ashton and the veteran Ezio Pinza as Raimondo are adequate. For those interested in such things it can be reported that the famous sextet *Che me frena in tal momento* is excellently sung, all the voices blending well and everyone staying on key.

Renata Cellini directs the RCA Victor Orchestra in both recordings, giving way, particularly in the Lucia recording, to the wishes of his singers in the matter of taking liberties with the score. He allows them to hold notes they feel show their voices to good advantage and skipping lightly over certain others. Recording is good in both discs and admirers of the singers involved can be assured that they all sound very good indeed. W.

Delibes: Lakmé (complete). (Sung in French). Mado Robin (soprano); Jane Perriat and Agnes Disney (mezzo-sopranos); Libero de Luca (tenor); Jacques Jansen (baritone); Jean Borthayre (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the Opéra-Comique conducted by Goerges Sebastian. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-12) \$17.85.

What with the speed and frequency with which music is being committed to tape and thence to LP discs, it is unusual indeed to find an opera being recorded for the first time. Leo Delibes' pseudo-oriental opera, *Lakmé*, had its first production, and an extremely lavish one, at the Opéra-Comique on 14 April 1883 with the redoubtable Marie van

Zandt in the title role. Since that time the part has been a prime favorite with coloraturas, some possessing only what Ernest Newman aptly describes as "laryngeal ability" which is not enough for a really successful characterization.

The present recording has a Lakmé who lends a degree of distinction to the role, Mado Robin. Mlle. Robin has a light and youthful voice, accurate in pitch and capable of expression. She sings and reports herself in sterling fashion, making a big thing indeed of the famous *Bell Song*. As her English lover, Libero de Luca is something less than satisfactory, although never really bad. His voice is light and of not too great range. Even for only moderately high notes there is a sense of strain and he seems to be out of breath much of the time. The Nilakantha of Jean Borthayre is good vocally as well as artistically, his being the best male voice in the cast. It is a rich and well projected organ that is pleasurable to listen to as well as being very much in character. Others in the long cast are competent singers. Jane Perriat as Mistress Bentson, Agnes Disney as Mallika and Jacques Jensen as Frédéric all turn in fine performances. Georges Sebastian directs his forces with a firm hand and achieves a performance that is coherent and tonally secure.

London has supplied good recording but a word of warning is necessary covering the libretto. There are long passages that have been omitted from the recording, spoken dialogue in all probability but it is very difficult to follow the singing for there are no indications in the booklet as to which is which. The English version of the text is deplorable, it being one of those stilted, inaccurate renderings that pass for operatic translation in some quarters. W.

Mozart: Così fan Tutte, K. 588 (complete). (Sung in English). Eleanor Steber, Roberta Peters (sopranos); Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano); Richard Tucker (tenor); Frank Guarrera (baritone); Lorenzo Alvary (basso); Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fritz Stiedry. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-122) \$17.35.

Mozart's delightful *Così fan Tutte*, the second of his great operas to be described as a *dramma giocoso*, has been issued by Columbia in an "official" Metropolitan Opera Company production. It is replete with a new English translation (a dubious benefit in this reviewer's mind) and a cast of good, if not Mozartean, singers.

The libretto of *Così fan Tutte* has been worked over by more people than one can shake a stick at—always with the same result; Da Ponte and Mozart knew what they were about. This translation, while eminently singable, does not sparkle as does the original Italian. Criticism has been leveled at da Ponte's story and some feel that Mozart did not compose it "seriously." This is sheer nonsense. Even

a cursory hearing of Guglielmo's aria when he discovers that Fiordiligi is untrue, and Fiordiligi's own aria when she realizes that she is weak and is about to give way to her newly awakened feelings, show Mozart's seriousness. As W. J. Turner has rightly said, "... *Così fan Tutte* is a tragicomedy and the most profound and terrifying work of its kind that has ever been written."

The cast for this recording has, as mentioned above, its shortcomings. Tucker and Guarrera, as the two lovers, seem to miss the point of the work—they are more interested in the possibilities of buffoonery than in trying to understand the characters they portray. Steber and Thebom while vocally resplendent, remain themselves. Roberta Peters' Despina is lifeless. The only singer showing a modicum of understanding is Lorenzo Alvary, an excellent basso and a fine, cynical Don Alfonso. Fritz Stiedry tries to coax some feeling from his orchestra but his efforts are not well rewarded. Columbia's recording is uniformly good throughout.

The only other LP recording of this immortal music is Period's (TNR Sept. '52) which also left much to be desired. The old Victor (HMV) set, long out of print but promised for early LP release, still stands as the recording of this sparkling music.

W.

Verdi: Aida (complete). (Sung in Italian). Stella Roman (soprano), Sylvia Sawyer (mezzo-soprano), Gino Sarri (tenor), Antonio Manca Serra (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Alberto Paoletti. 3-12" discs in album (*CL-PCR-8179) \$14.94.

Verdi: Aida (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Stella Roman (soprano), Sylvia Sawyer (mezzo-soprano), Gino Sarri (tenor), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Alberto Paoletti. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8177) \$4.98.

Verdi: Il Trovatore (complete). (Sung in Italian). Stella Roman (soprano), Sylvia Sawyer (mezzo-soprano), Gino Sarri (tenor), Antonio Manca Serra (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Luigi Ricci. 2-12" discs in album (*CL-PBR-8180) \$9.96.

Verdi: Il Trovatore (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Stella Roman (soprano), Sylvia Sawyer (mezzo-soprano), Gino Sarri (tenor), Antonio Manca Serra (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Luigi Ricci. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8178) \$4.98.

Capital enters the field of Italian opera by issuing the fourth *Il Trovatore* and third *Aida* on LP records. This lack of originality would not be so bad if the performances were first-rate, but the presentations are as unoriginal as the choice of material. Essentially the same cast of singers is used in both operas and their work is characterized by an appalling

lack of imagination and general indifference to the high musical values contained in the immortal scores.

Stella Roman is the most capable of the mediocre group, but both her Leonora and Aida are lacking in the fire and brilliance so essential to a successful portrayal. Vocally she is capable. Gino Sarri is a leather-lunged tenor who is totally lacking in the finer aspects of operatic characterization; his Rha-dames and Manrico remain unconvincing. Antonio Manca Serra has a few moments when he really gets inside the roles of Amonasro and di Luna; but, apparently disliking what he finds there, he quickly returns and descends to the level of the others. Victor Tatzolzi (who sang with the Philadelphia La Scala Company a few seasons ago) is a wooden Ferrando and Rhamphis. Perhaps the most pathetic figure is Sylvia Sawyer whose Azucena and Amneris are woefully inadequate.

The direction of Paoletti (*Aida*) and of Ricci (*Il Trovatore*) are undistinguished unless one considers the low quality of the general musicianship a distinguishing feature. Capital's recording is on the dull side, occasionally muddy, sometimes shrill, Libretti are included. The *Highlights* include the principal arias and concerted numbers taken from the complete sets.

Among the available *Il Trovatore*s, the RCA Victor set (TNR Nov. '52) is by all odds the best; the Cetra *Aida* (TNR Feb. '52) is the best to date, although there is room for improvement. W.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (excerpts). Ferdinand Frantz (bass) with the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7067) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Wahnmonolog*; *Prelied*; *Verachtet mir die Meister nicht* . . . ; *Mein Kind*; *Euch macht ihr's leicht* (Sachs). *Prelude* (Act I); *Prelude* (Act III) (Orchestra).

In the November 1951 issue we reviewed the complete *Die Meistersinger* issued by Urania, and we praised the singing of Ferdinand Frantz. For those who tastes do not run to complete operas, here are the Sachs' excerpts taken from the complete opera and re-issued on this 12-inch LP disc; as a bonus you also get the two preludes listed in the heading.

Borodin: Prince Igor (Acts I, II, & IV complete). (Sung in Russian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra GABT of U.S.S.R. conducted by A. Malik-Pashayev. 3-12" discs in album (*PE-SPL-552) \$18.50.

Ernest Newman once wittily observed that "the funny thing about these Russian operas is that they're all written by someone else." This is very true of *Prince Igor*. Of course, it is mainly Borodin but Rimsky-Korsakov had a hand in the prologue and other portions. Glazounov did the *Overture* and *Prisoners Chorus*. Borodin himself used portions of

another piece he wrote (an opera *Mlada*, undertaken in conjunction with Rimsky-Korsakov, Moussorgsky and Cui) and finally, one can not be sure whether some of the melodies in *Prince Igor* that seem to be folk tunes are Borodin's own or not. Be all this as it may, *Prince Igor* is a wonderful experience. The music is colorful, tuneful and exciting. The story and musical treatment are epic, rather than dramatic and, while the plot is loosely constructed, this is generally atoned for by "the beauty of Borodin's music and the copiousness of his invention."

The cast for this recording is a large one and features some really good singers. In the title role Andrei Ivanov, a baritone of good range and power, sings with fervor and conviction. As Kontchak, a basso identified as M. Reizen, displays one of those typically Russian bass voices that are both thrilling and musical. He lends a distinguished air to the role while his singing of the aria *How goes it, Prince?* compares favorably with Chaliapin's recording of the late twenties. Vladimir is sung by S. Lemeshov (could this be the Serge Lemeshov who made a number of Russian operatic excerpts for Victor in 1928/29?) who is acceptable without being on the same high artistic level of the others.

On the distaff side the vocal quality is pleasing, particularly Borisenko (contralto) as Kontchakovna. Smolenskaya, as Yaroslava, Igor's wife, is inclined to shrill and nasal top notes but improves greatly in the middle and lower registers.

The third act of the opera is not recorded; in fact, it is summarily dismissed in the notes as having "greater eye than ear appeal and its loss on records is not important." A perusal of an analysis of the opera does not agree with this statement; but, in all events, Act III is deleted.

A. Malik-Pashayev directs his forces with vigor and good sense; the choral work is good. The recording is the best the reviewer has heard from Russian sources, being very good in most passages. An eminently readable Russian-English libretto is furnished. W.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice (complete). (Sung in Italian). Erna Berger and Rita Streich (sopranos); Margarete Klose (contralto); chorus and orchestra of Berlin Civic Opera conducted by Arthur Rother. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-223) \$18.50.

This, the first virtually complete version of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, is a welcome addition to the recorded repertory. The opera, one of the earliest still to hold the stage, is a magnificent work, abounding in the stately melodies one always associates with Gluck and his era.

First produced in 1762 at Vienna, *Orfeo ed Euridice* was sung in Italian, and then the score was later reworked for a performance in Paris in 1774. In 1859 the Théâtre Lyrique commissioned Berlioz to edit the so-called "Paris" version and restore the

chief role to the contralto voice (it had been written originally for *castrato*, then in the Paris version for tenor). It is the Berlioz edition that is recorded here although it is sung in Italian. The few excisions made in the score are noted and justified.

The cast is as fine as one could ask. Margarete Klose, one of Europe's really great altos, is ideally suited to the role, and her deep chest tones are thrilling and almost masculine in timbre. Naturally, being a fine musician as well as an accomplished singer, Mme. Klose's grasp of style and sense of fitness is apparent in every bar she sings. The Euridice of Erna Berger is at once distinguished and pathetic. Vocally of course, it is virtually perfect. The moving *E quest' asilo* is beautifully sung, and her other all-too-short portions are equally fine. Rita Streich is a fresh voiced Amor who sings with feeling and genuine musicianship.

As is always the case with a successful operatic performance, much credit must be given the man at the conductor's desk—in this case the competent Arthur Rother. His generalship, tempi and phrasing are in good taste throughout. The choral passages are sung with care and good tonal quality.

Urania's recording, made this year in Berlin, is very good, ranking with the best they have given us. The only other recording of this historic score is the abridged performance on Vox (TNR Mar. '51) that is notable for the superb Orfeo of the late Alice Raveau. There is room for both sets in any collection. A complete libretto and above average notes are supplied. W.

Delibes: Lakmé—Air des clochettes. One side, and **Delibes: Lakmé**—Pourquoi dans les grands bois? And **Delibes: Lakmé**—Dans la forêt pres de nous. (Sung in French). Lily Pons (soprano) with symphony orchestra conducted by Gabriel Cloëz. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4024) \$2.50.

These are very early recordings of Miss Pons made for Deutsche Grammophon. They show her youthful voice very nicely, but the accompaniments are not the life-like ones we are accustomed to hear in modern recordings.

Offenbach—arr. Rosenthal: **La Vie Parisienne**. One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—Entracte, Act IV; Habanera; Seguidilla; Chanson de Bohême; Card Song. (Sung in French). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Morel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4608) \$5.45.

La Vie Parisienne is a suite for voice and orchestra adapted from various Offenbach operettas by Manuel Rosenthal. Mr. Rosenthal dedicated his suite to the present vocalist, Jennie Tourel. Miss Tourel was certainly in fine form for this recording and also for the *Carmen* selections that are to be found on the reverse side of this attractive LP record.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in E-flat, Op. 7. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 19 in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1** and **Beethoven: Polonaise in C, Op. 89.** Hugo Steurer (piano). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7055) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 14, No. 2 and **Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, No. 3—Warum.** One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 22 in F, Op. 54** and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp, Op. 78.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-603) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 28 in A, Op. 101.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-597) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5150) \$5.95.

Recently a number of LP discs have been released containing a wealth of Beethoven keyboard music. Lack of space does not permit us to deal with each in detail; about all we can do is list them so that our readers will know that they are available. We must, however, call attention to the two discs listed above by Wilhelm Backhaus because new releases by that eminent German pianist are always of prime importance.

Debussy: Petite Suite. One side, and **Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye** ("Mother Goose Suite"). Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robertson (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (*MGME-161) \$3.

If you would like to have these two popular works in their original versions for piano four hands, you will probably never have better performances than the great piano team of Bartlett and Robertson offers on the present LP disc. This little record deserves our highest recommendation.

American Music Series. Bernhard Weiser (piano). 1-12" disc (*NEW EDITIONS 1) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 1* (Shapero); *From My Diary* (Sessions); *Partita* (Berger); *Sonata* (Flanagan).

This LP disc contains four piano pieces by four American composers—all of which have been composed during the last fifteen years; thus we have samples of the keyboard music that our native composers are turning out in the present period of our musical development. The earliest work is Roger Sessions' *From My Diary* which dates from 1937-40 and the latest is William Flanagan's *Sonata*, which was completed in 1950. The selection of the American pianist, Bernhard Weiser, who is known for his interest in modern American music, is a very happy one indeed.



DICTION

Readings from "The Ramayana." Read in Sanskrit by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. One side, and **Readings from "Bhagavad Gita."** Read in Sanskrit by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan and in English by Swami Nikhilananda. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FP-92) \$5.95.

The *Ramayana* is believed to be the premier epic poem of India. Its author was the sage, Valmiki; its age is not definitely known. Millions of people in India read at least one chapter of it each day; some read it as exquisite literature, others for the wisdom it scintillates or for its theistic flavor.

In a nutshell, the story concerns the hero, Rama, and the heroine, Sita, who, with Rama's brother, Lakshmana, are in exile, living on the banks of the Godavari in South India. Sita is stolen away, and Rama and his representative, Hanuman, search for her. The present reading is taken from chapters 31, 35 and 36 of the fifth book, known as the *Sundara-kanda*, and describes the scene in which Hanuman discovers Sita and hands over to her the ring of Rama as a credential of his being Rama's messenger. We can only presume that the reading in Sanskrit is accurate; but excellent notes will give the purchaser of this disc the whole story of what is going on. Also included is a section from the sixth book, *Yudhakanda*, known as Brahma's Hymn. The Sanskrit texts for all of the above are included in the notes.

The *Gita* is the most popular scripture of the Hindus and was regarded by Gandhi as his unfailing guide. In these texts, read here in Sanskrit and in English, Sri Krishna, teacher of the *Gita*, explains to Arjuna, his pupil, the characteristic marks of the man who has realized God. Again, the prospective buyer is referred to the copious notes which tell much more than we can give space for here.

VOCAL



Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) and Julius Patzak (tenor) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Three sides, and **Mahler: (3) Rückert Lieder** ("Ich atmet' einen linden Duft," "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen," "Um Mitternacht"). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-625/6) \$11.90.

One of the prized possessions of many record collectors was the old Columbia recording of *Das Lied von der Erde* by Thorberg and Kullman conducted by Bruno Walter. As very seldom happens, here is a replacement that outshines the original. Technical advances account for a lot of the improvement, but one can not help feeling that the years

between 1936 (the time of the first recording) and 1952 deepened the already rare understanding of the conductor. Miss Ferrier and Herr Patzak are both in fine voice—one would expect Kathleen Ferrier to be vocally opulent for she is an extremely gifted young woman. The surprise is the fifty-four year old Julius Patzak who sings with a vocal splendor that is nothing short of amazing!

Bruno Walter, of course, is an old hand at this type of music. It was Walter, incidentally, who gave the first performance of this "Symphony" on 20 November 1911, six months after Mahler's death, so the performance here must be considered definitive. From the opening bars on through the six songs that comprise this "Tenth Symphony" down to the final words *Allüberall und ewig blauen licht die Fernen, ewig . . . ewig . . .* there is evidence of the guiding genius of Bruno Walter. His obvious love for the music is communicated to both artists and listener with the result that the performance is at once compelling and disarming. It is scarcely necessary to speak of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. This great symphonic organization, with its rich tradition, plays with precision, warmth and understanding.

Miss Ferrier sings the three *Rückert Songs* listed above with Walter and the orchestra, on the fourth side. These too, are handsomely done.

London is usually happy in its recording sessions with the Vienna orchestra, and the sound here is of the finest. Comprehensive notes by Martin Cooper, short biographical sketches of the artists and the German-English texts of the songs are included.

W.

Jones: The Geisha (abridged). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7059) \$5.95.

Here's one for the book! The English operetta *The Geisha*, which was a great hit in both England and America during the late nineties and the early part of the present century, is released in a recorded version made in Germany with a German cast and sung in German. Now who would want such a recording? Musically it is all right but the charm of such a work lies largely in the clever lyrics and if these are not understandable then in our opinion its appeal is practically zero.

Lecocq: Giroflé-Girofla (abridged). (Sung in German). Soloists, chorus and orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Willi Lachner. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7054) \$5.95.

Here is a quite satisfactory recording of an abridged version of the popular French 19th century operetta *Giroflé-Girofla* sung in German. It would appear that Radio Berlin is producing a number of operettas of various countries and that Urania is making recordings of them available over here. For

those interested this is a great break because we cannot imagine their ever becoming available in any other way—the demand for them in America is not large enough to warrant their being recorded by local artists.

MISCELLANEOUS



Recorder and Harpsichord Recital (Vol. II). Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and Joseph Saxby (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-278) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *La Follia* (Corelli); *Sonata in C minor*—Largo, Poco allegro (Locillet); *Sonata No. 1 in D minor* (Telemann); *Fortune My Foe, Nobody's Jigg*, *Spagnoletta*, *Coranto* (4 Traditional English Tunes).

Just about three years ago the first volume of Dolmetsch and Saxby's "Recorder and Harpsichord Recital" was released and it proved to be a "sleepy"—that is it was a little record that was issued without any fanfare and no one expected that it would cause even a ripple in the general record sales, but it took hold and by word of mouth advertising it enjoyed quite a respectable sale. Here is the second volume and we wish it the best of luck—perhaps the music loving public is ready for another taste of this odd music of another age.

Songs and Dances of Yugoslavia. Recorded by Laura Boulton in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-805) \$4.45.

Songs and Dances of Armenia. Recorded in Armenia. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-806) \$4.45.

Religious Music of India. Recorded in India under the direction of Alain Danielou. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-431) \$5.95.

Songs of the Watutsi. Recorded in Ruanda, in east-central Africa by the Rev. Leo A. Verwilghen. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-428) \$5.95.

Indian Music of Mexico. Recorded in Mexico by Henrietta Yorchenco. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-413) \$5.95.

Maori Songs of New Zealand. Recorded by New Zealand Broadcasting Service. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-433) \$5.95.

Songs and Pipes of the Hebrides. Recorded on the Outer Hebrides Islands by Polly Hitchcock. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-430) \$5.95.

The Ethnic Folkways Library continues with its fine issues of authentic folk and ethnic music of many lands. The reproduction of the LP discs listed above will be found well up to that of previous issues which have met with wide acceptance among collectors of this type of music.

A complete catalog of all Ethnic Folkways releases is available, and if your local dealers cannot supply you, a post card addressed to the publishers

of this bulletin will bring you one by return mail, gratis.

Old Curiosity Shop. Various artists and accompaniments, recorded at dates indicated below. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1112) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1112) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Bill—Helen Morgan (1928); *I Have to Have You*—Helen Kane (1929); *Topics of the Day*—Will Rogers (1923); *I'm the Last of the Red Hot Mamas*—Sophie Tucker (1929); *Love*—Gloria Swanson (1929); *Casey at the Bat*—De Wolf Hopper (1926); *Falling in Love Again*—Marlene Dietrich; *Valentine*—Maurice Chevalier (1929); *Hamlet's Soliloquy* ("Now I Am Alone")—John Barrymore (1928); *My Man*—Fanny Brice (1921); *Turn Off Your Light, Mr. Moon Man*—Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth (1911); *Dreams of Long Ago*—Enrico Caruso (1912).

This LP disc will be of particular interest to those of us who remember the theatre in the two decades from 1910 to 1930. To us it will very likely bring back many nostalgic memories. To others it will hardly have much appeal unless they wish to investigate and find out what we oldsters thought was great stuff in an era when vaudeville was one of the chief forms of entertainment.

An Andrés Segovia Concert. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9638) \$5.85.

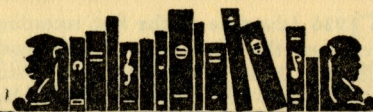
CONTENTS: *Fantasia* (Milan); *Suite (de Visée)*; *Variations on a Theme by Mozart* (Sors); *Allegretto grazioso* and *Gavotte* (Handel); *Bourée* and *Courante* (Bach); *Sonata* (Giuliani); *Homenaje a Debussy* and *Pour le Tombeau de Debussy* (Fallá); *Etude* (Villa-Lobos).

Twentieth Century Music for the Guitar. Rey de la Torre (guitar). 1-12" disc (*PHM-PH-106) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Variations on a Theme by Milán* (Nin-Culmell); *Zarabanda Lejana* (Rodrigo); *Homenaje a Debussy* (Fallá); *Preludio y Tocata* (Orbón); *Torre Bermeja* (Albeniz); *Leyenda* (Albeniz); *La Maja de Goya* (Granados); *Spanish Dance No. 5* (Granados).

Perhaps no one has given more prominence to the guitar as a solo instrument than Andrés Segovia, here demonstrating his impeccable technique again for his many fans. Persons who own his first LP disc (*D-DL-8022) will surely want this one, too. . . . Rey de la Torre has been heard on records before (*AL-AL-76, TNR Mar. '51), and is well-known because of his many concert performances both here and in Latin-American countries.

Reproduction of both discs—excellent.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hady's Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 20, NO. 12

FEBRUARY, 1953

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WITH this issue the twentieth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed. Twenty years does not seem a very long time but in the history of the record industry the last twenty years is of prime importance. This is particularly true when one considers that very little worth while music was recorded before 1913. Thus THE NEW RECORDS in point of time has covered one-half of the period of classical recordings. However, as to quantity, we are of the opinion that at least eighty per cent of the classical recordings issued since 1913 were released in the last twenty years, the period covered by THE NEW RECORDS. Those who have kept their files of this little bulletin complete have a record of the vast majority of the classical recordings that have been made available in this country since the advent of the phonograph.

At the present time we are reviewing more than three times as many records as we did in our issues of twenty years ago. Then about twenty to twenty-five new records appeared each month; in recent issues we have been covering more than seventy-five and we have been hard put to keep up with the ever increasing number of new releases that arrive at the studio. In some cases we can do little more than list new items so that our readers will know, at least, that they have been made available. This is especially true in the chamber music and the piano recording field. We regret this, but we are limited to sixteen pages and must do the best we can. The greatly increased interest in recordings since the advent of the LP's has seemingly made it profitable for a vast number of new record publishers to come into the market, and new recordings are appearing each month in ever greater numbers. As long as this condition prevails, space will be at a premium in our little bulletin, and many items that really deserve a proper review

will have to be dismissed with little more than a listing. Our primary aim is to keep our readers advised of the availability of all of the new recordings in the classical field.

* * *

Opera lovers will doubtless be delighted to learn that there has recently been published a 48-page booklet entitled "The Catalogue of Opera on Records." The catalog is divided into four sections: (1) Operas—complete, abridged, excerpted; (2) Featured Singers and Conductors, including aria collections, recitals; (3) Operatic arias; and (4) composers.

Section 1 contains the following information: title of opera; composer; number of acts; date of first performance; whether complete, abridged, etc.; language in which sung; cast, choral group and conductor; record company; catalog number; number and size of records; speeds on which available. Sections 2, 3 and 4 are cross-indices of Section 1.

The publishers of this bulletin have secured a limited number of these catalogs, and we will be happy to supply them to readers requesting them. Just ask for "The Catalogue of Opera on Records," and enclose 10c (coin or stamps) to cover mailing costs.

* * *

NOTE: We are sorry to say that the date line on page one of our last issue read "January, 1952." It should, of course, have read "January, 1953." The date was correct on all of the succeeding pages. Those readers who are keeping a complete file of our little publication should make the correction on their copies in order to save confusion in filing the back issues.

RENEWALS

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may

not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. Each year we send renewal blanks to everyone with the February issue (the last number in the volume) and in March we check the subscription list and drop those whose subscriptions have expired during the last year and who have not renewed them.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.) Microgroove records have been reviewed in every issue beginning with Vol. 16, No. 10. A complete file of these (51 copies) may be had at the special price of \$3 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Bach: *Suite No. 2 in D minor for Unaccompanied Violoncello*. One side, and Bach: *Suite No. 3 in C for Unaccompanied Violoncello*. Pablo Casals (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1104) \$5.72. (TNR Dec. '39).

Wagner: *Lohengrin*—Das süsse Lied verhalt (Act III, Sc. 2). One side, and Wagner: *Parsifal*—Herzeleid Scene (Act II). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) and Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra—McArthur. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1105) \$5.72. (TNR July '43 & Apr. '41).

Glière: *Symphony No. 3 in B minor, Op. 42* ("Ilia Mourometz"). Philadelphia Orchestra—Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1106) \$5.72. (TNR Dec. '41).

Bach *Arias*. One side, and *Great Songs of Faith*. Marian Anderson (contralto) with RCA Victor Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1111). \$5.72. (TNR Feb. '47 & Dec. '41).

Sibelius: *Concerto in D minor, Op. 47*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with London Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. One side, and Chausson: *Concerto in D, Op. 21*. Jascha Heifetz (violin), Jesús María Sanromá (piano) with Musical Art Quartet. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1113) \$5.72. (TNR July '36 & Mar. '42).

Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake, Op. 20* (excerpts). London Philharmonic Orchestra—Dorati. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3014) \$3.08. (TNR Jan. '45).

Rachmaninoff: *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43*. One side, and Rachmaninoff: *Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, Op. 1*. Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1118) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '35 & Feb. '42).

Schumann: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 129*. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) with London Philharmonic Orchestra—Barbirolli. One side, and Brahms: *Sonata No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38*. Artur Rubinstein (piano) and Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1119) \$5.72. (TNR Nov. '34 & July '39).

Bach: *Concerto in D minor for Two Violins and Orchestra*. Yehudi Menuhin and Georges Enesco (violins) with orchestra—Monteux. One side, and Bach: *Sonata No. 3 in E for Harpsichord and Violin*. Wanda Landowska (harpsichord) and Yehudi Menuhin (violin). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1120) \$5.72. (TNR Apr. '33 and Mar. '46).

Piatigorsky *Plays Russian Melodies*. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Ralph Berkowitz (piano). One side, and Shostakovich: *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 40*. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Valentin Pavlovsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3015) \$3.08. (TNR July '47 & Dec. '44).

Bless This House. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with Warner Bass (organ). One side, and *The Children's Hour*. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with orchestra—Affelder. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3016) \$3.08. TNR Apr. '49).

Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 3 in A minor* ("Scotch"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3017) \$3.08. (TNR June '43).

Tchaikovsky: *Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23*. Egon Petri (piano) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra—Goehr. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3018) \$3.08. (TNR May '38).

Handel: *Water Music Suite*. One side, and Handel: *Royal Fireworks Music*. London Philharmonic Orchestra—Harty. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3019) \$3.08. (TNR Dec. '33 & Dec. '35).

Pop Concert (Vol. I). Chicago Symphony Orchestra—Stock. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3022) \$3.08. (Formerly single discs: see TNR Vol. 8, No. 5; Vol. 9, No. 8; Vol. 10, Nos. 1, 2, 4; Vol. 11, No. 1).

Beethoven: (12) *Contra-Dances*. One side, and Vaughan Williams: *Suite* ("English Folk Songs"). Columbia Broadcasting Symphony—Barlow. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3023) \$3.08. (TNR Feb. '41 & Mar. '40).

Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107* ("Reformation"). Columbia Broadcasting Symphony—Barlow. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3024) \$3.08. (TNR Jan. '40).

Schumann: *Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61* Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3025) \$3.08. (TNR June '42).

Schumann: *Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120*. One side, and Mozart: *Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504* ("Prague"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra—Stock. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3026) \$3.08. (TNR Nov. '41 & Aug. '40).

R. Strauss: *Don Quixote*, Op. 35. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra—Reiner, with Gregor Piatigorsky (violin), Henry Temianka (violin) and Vladimir Bakaleinikoff (viola). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3027) \$3.08. (TNR Dec. '42).

Chopin: *Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11*. Edward Kilenyi (piano) with Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3028) \$3.08. (TNR Sept. '42).

Music for Films. Queen's Hall Light Orchestra and Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3029) \$3.08. (TNR Jan. '49).

Tchaikovsky: *Concerto in D, Op. 35*. Nathan Milstein (violin) with Chicago Symphony Orchestra—Stock. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3032) \$3.08. (TNR Sept. '40).

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64*. Philharmonia Orchestra—Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3036) \$3.08. (TNR Oct. '47).

Brahms: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a* and Weber: *Jubel-Overture in E, Op. 59*. One side, and Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture in C minor, Op. 62* and Beethoven: *Leonore Overture No. 3 in C, Op. 72a*. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3038) \$3.08. (TNR Aug. '42, Nov. '48, Mar. '40, & Sept. '40).

Liszt: *Rhapsodie Espagnole*. Egon Petri (piano) with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. One side, and Chopin: (18) *Preludes, Op. 28*. Egon Petri (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3040) \$3.08. (TNR May '40 & Nov. '42).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60*. Four sides, and Schumann: *Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120*. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1714) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1714) \$5.72.

On more than one occasion Pierre Monteux has

shown that he performs works of the German school as splendidly as works of the French school. This pair of "Fourth's" demonstrates that very well. The Schumann is as fine a performance of the *Fourth* as we have ever heard, and is to be preferred to any other version now on discs, offering as well, the best reproduction of the recorded Schumann *Fourth*. From the very beginning, Monteux performs this music with a delicate and perfect balance of strength and beauty. He brings to the music a justness and proportion that are admirable, and never neglects the songful lines and the romantic color of the score. This is the "prettiest" and best liked of the Schumann symphonies, and Monteux's reading makes it doubly enjoyable. We can recommend it as a wonderful listening experience to anyone who has even half an interest in symphonic music.

The Beethoven *Fourth* may be somewhat neglected in concert performances, but it has fared well on discs, as there are over half a dozen good LP discs of it, plus some more not so good. Beecham and Furtwängler have fine readings, Szell and Solti also are worth while, and we recently reviewed a disc on which Bruno Walter does the Beethoven *Second* and *Fourth* (*C-ML-4596). Here the matter of coupling may concern you between Walter and Monteux.

Much has been said about Beethoven's *Fourth* because of its softer and more lyrical moods. Many have read romance into its pages, and connected it with Beethoven's love life. Whatever the facts may be concerning its composition, it remains today a happy and serene work, a product of one of the calmer periods of the master's life. Monteux has caught the spirit of this work with fine understanding and gives it a reading that could elicit nothing but praise. In this, and in the Schumann symphony, the San Francisco Orchestra plays as well as we have ever heard them; it is often great playing. Victor has supplied excellent reproduction, with one tiny exception: the oboes sometimes have a steely, almost percussive sound in the ensemble, a rather curious thing which may not be noticeable on many machines. S.

Brahms: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68*.

NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1702) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1702) \$5.72.

Those who admire the conducting of Toscanini will readily acquire this new recording of the Brahms *First*; others who like music will do well to investigate several other versions and decide on one of them.

The story of this record is about the same as the recently issued Brahms *Fourth* by Toscanini. The *First* is not driven quite as hard because the music itself is of a warmer type, and even the opaque-

toned NBC Orchestra sounds good in some of the lovelier passages of this work. But as a whole, it remains a note perfect, mechanical masterpiece that is cruelly lacking in the beauty that the music can produce. The string section of the NBC Symphony (under Toscanini) has about as dry and wiry a tone as any major orchestra in the country, and it shows up in this work. It may be good playing, and it is undeniably accurate; but it is almost wholly lacking in any warmth, beauty, sheen, or richness. That goes for the brasses and woodwinds in large measure too. To compare these choirs with the Philadelphia, Boston, or New York Philharmonic is something we hate to do.

We would recommend Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4477) for this work as the one most persons will enjoy. There are others that are fine, and worth considering, including Keilberth, Rodzinski, Stokowski, Leinsdorf, and the Weingartner reissue, but Ormandy combines the best in reproduction with a good performance by an orchestra with a wonderful tonal quality. For the record, this is a new recording, and not a repressing of the 78 rpm set issued some years ago by RCA Victor with the same artists. S.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Hamlet, Op. 67** (Overture-Fantasia). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3002) \$4.85.

Tchaikovsky: Hamlet, Op. 67 (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Ouverture-Solennelle "1812," Op. 49**. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*LL-582) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Ouverture-Solennelle "1812," Op. 49. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31**. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-24) \$2.85.

Tchaikovsky: Ouverture-Solennelle "1812," Op. 49. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31**. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra (N. Y.) conducted by Alexander Smallens. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4031) \$2.50.

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onegin—Waltz and Polonaise. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Quartet in D, Op. 11**—Andante Cantabile. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra (N. Y.) conducted by Alexander Smallens. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4033) \$2.50.

A flood of Tchaikovsky orchestral recordings has recently arrived—too many to cover in detail. However, since all of the selections are well-known, not much needs be said about them. It is a matter of which orchestra and conductor you personally prefer. The reproduction throughout is excellent; and as now practically all LP discs are coming through with smooth and quiet surfaces there is

not much choice from that angle. We might mention that we think that the two little Decca discs are both fine values; they are the last two records listed above.

Dancers of Bali. Gamelan Orchestra from the Village of Pliatan, Bali, directed by Anak Agung GdeMANDERA. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4618) \$5.45.

This disc will be of interest to two distinct groups—those who are interested in the authentic music of Bali, a small island east of Java (this recording was made by arrangement with the Cultural Department of the Republic of Indonesia), and those who wish to test and demonstrate their high fidelity reproducing equipment. The series of cymbals, drums and gongs which make up the orchestra are ideal for the latter purpose. Dealers inform us that the majority of these records are sold to hi-fi fans—there are apparently more of them than there are of persons interested in the musical culture of Indonesia.

Handel: Water Music Suite. Three sides, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Overture. One side, and **Schumann: Genoveva**—Overture. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7009) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7009) \$4.67.

Of particular interest on this little LP disc is the fine recording of the Overture to Schumann's ill-fated opera *Genoveva*. We understand that this selection is quite popular in Europe, and that it often appears on the programs of prominent European orchestras, although the opera itself disappeared long ago after a very few performances. We do not remember ever having heard it until the present disc arrived at the studio. We found it reasonably interesting; it indicates clearly that Schuman had a flair for writing orchestral music with a distinct dramatic impact. We recommend it to those who would like to study Schumann from that angle.

Moussorgsky—arr. Ravel: **Pictures at an Exhibition**. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. Four sides, and **Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet** (Overture-Fantasia). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1719) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1719) \$5.72.

Guido Cantelli, a protégé of Toscanini, is one of the most talked-of young conductors of the present time. Among his many appearances in the United States he is best known for his successful series of guest performances with his mentor's own NBC Symphony. Cantelli has chosen for this LP disc two very popular orchestral selections, and he presents them with fine spirit and the essence of good taste. Record collectors will doubtless be anxious to hear how this brilliant young conductor handles pieces that they know so well.

Mozart: (20) Country Dances for Orchestra. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-426) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Contre-tanz in D, K. 534* ("Das Donnerwetter"); *Contretänze, K.V. 609*—Nos. 1 to 5; *Deutsche Tänze, K. 600*—Nos. 1 to 5; *Deutsche Tanz, K. 602*—No. 3; *Deutsche Tänze, K. 605*—Nos. 1 to 3; *Ländler, K. 606*—Nos. 1 to 5.

Beethoven: (12) Deutsche Tänze. One side, and **Mozart: (6) Deutsche Tänze, K. 509.** L'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by René Leibowitz. And **Schubert**—arr. Webern: (6) *Deutsche Tänze.* Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-512) \$5.95.

The great composers were not above writing some mighty pleasing little dance tunes as this pair of LP discs will amply testify. All of these selections were written to be enjoyed, so put these records on your phonograph and enjoy them to their fullest.

Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"). One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525** ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7760) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade No. 7 in D, K. 250 ("Haffner"). Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner, with Dénes Zsigmondy (violin). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9636) \$5.85.

We can see no particular reason for the issuance of these two LP discs. The music that they contain is already represented in the catalogs by superior recordings. A check of Schwann's shows fourteen versions of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, nine "Jupiter" Symphonies and three "Haffner" Serenades. Those interested may have a field day selecting the recorded versions that best suit their tastes.

Poulenc: Les Biches (Ballet Suite). One side, and **Scarlatti**—orch. Tommasini: **Good Humored Ladies** (Ballet Suite). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-624) \$5.95.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. One side, and **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2.** And **Massenet: Thaïs**—Ballet Music. L'Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7058) \$5.95.

French music lovers are apparently particularly fond of ballet music, for some of the finest recordings in that field have been made by French orchestras under the direction of French conductors. The two LP discs listed above are fine examples. Roger Désormière of the Opéra-Comique and George Sebastian of the Paris Grand Opera are two conductors who are noted for their fine performances of such spirited music. Sebastian will be remembered by

American music lovers as an Assistant Conductor at the Metropolitan Opera in the twenties and for his radio programs over CBS. He returned to France in 1947.

Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67. Arthur Godfrey (narrator) with Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. One side, and **Kern: Mark Twain** (Portrait for Orchestra). And **Grofé: Mississippi Suite.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4625) \$5.45.

The inimitable Arthur Godfrey tells the story of "Peter and the Wolf" in a most fascinating manner, and we are very sure that the children are just going to love it. If you wish to make some youngster happy, get him this recording of Prokofiev's famous story with music. The reverse side of this LP disc contains two selections that formerly appeared on each side of a 10-inch LP record.

Elgar: Introduction and Allegro for Strings, Op. 47 and **Elgar: Serenade in E minor, Op. 20.** One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis** and **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on "Greensleeves."** New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-583) \$5.95.

Here are some lovely orchestral selections by English composers of our own generation. Of particular interest is Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on "Greensleeves,"* which has been much in demand in recorded form. We believe that those interested will be highly pleased with Anthony Collins' performances and also with London's *ffrr* reproduction.

Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1. Two and one-half sides, and **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2.** One and one-half sides, and **Bizet: Symphony No. 1 in C.** Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (♭V-WDM-1706) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1706) \$5.72.

Bizet's colorful music seems to appeal to Stokowski, for he often gives it his attention; when he does, fine and sympathetic performances are always the order of the day. The present performances are no exception, and so if this music is of interest to you, you will doubtless be highly pleased with these recordings.

Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. Three sides, and **Mahler: (8) Songs.** Desi Halban (soprano) accompanied by Bruno Walter (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-171) \$12.11. (TNR Jan. '48 & Apr. '49).

CONTENTS: *Erinnerung; Scheiden und Meiden; Nicht Wiedersehen; Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen Wald; Ablösung in Sommer; Hans und Grete; Frühlingsmorgen; Starke Einbildungskraft.*

Columbia has reissued the above recordings, both

highly praised by the critics when originally issued, and are to be congratulated therefor. Mahlerites will be well pleased with the transfer to LP.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream (Incidental Music). Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Fritz Reiner. Four sides, and **Debussy**—trans. Büsser: **Petite Suite**. Two sides, and **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin**. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-7" discs in album (øV-WDM-1724) 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1724) \$5.72.

Fritz Reiner, one of our finest conductors, presents grand performances of these three well-known orchestral selections on this attractive LP disc. RCA Victor has supplied top-notch reproduction.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 219 ("Turkish"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-9014) \$3.99. Coupled with **Beethoven: Romance in G, Op. 40** and **Beethoven: Romance in F, Op. 50**. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9014) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Romance in G, Op. 40. One side, and **Beethoven: Romance in F, Op. 50**. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-7" disc (øV-ERA-9) \$1.58.

Heifetz recorded the Mozart "Turkish" Concerto some years ago (on 78 rpm); this is a new recording and an excellent one. His principal competition is the recently issued one which is part of the Perpignan Festival series, played by Erica Morini with the Festival Orchestra under Casals (*C-ML-4565). To choose between these two is no easy matter. Heifetz is polished and suave to the highest degree, and he plays with a good sense of style. Erica Morini plays with even more Mozartian style, influenced probably by conductor Casals, and also with an abundance of polish and technical proficiency. The orchestra under Casals is more of a devoted Mozartian instrument, if a less finished ensemble, than the London Symphony under Sargent. Reproduction of both discs is good, Columbia's is characteristically at a higher level. Real Mozart purists will very likely prefer Morini and Casals, but most of the prospects for this disc will find Heifetz not only fills the bill, but that Victor has provided a bonus on the LP disc by coupling the *Beethoven Romances*. Columbia has a skimpy first side with the first movement only of the concerto, whereas Victor places the entire concerto on one side. Heifetz plays the second movement noticeably faster than Morini, but that would account for very little difference in the total time of the concerto.

The "Turkish" Concerto, one of five authentic

violin concertos by Mozart, was written when he was nineteen. It is a work of contrast as well as charm and beauty, and is, for the most part, gay and witty. The second movement has a strain of seriousness, even melancholy, woven through the serene and songlike melody, but the final movement returns to a spirit of good humor and merriment. Heifetz's playing of the Joachim cadenzas provides some moments of superior fiddling. His playing of the *Beethoven Romances*, we would say, is a shade less impassioned than the Francescatti performances, but he maintains an intense tone throughout these lyric pieces and gives a remarkable example of perfect intonation in long sustained notes and passages. S.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. Four sides, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto in D minor**. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) conducting the RCA Victor String Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1720) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1720) \$5.72.

The principal interest in this disc will, and should, center around the first performance of a "new" work, the long forgotten *Concerto in D minor*. This was a product of Mendelssohn's fourteenth year. It is listed in a compilation of the Mendelssohn catalog as long ago as 1867. However, the manuscript copy now owned by Menuhin was in private hands for a long time—from the time it was given by the composer's widow to his great friend Ferdinand David in 1852. It took nearly one hundred years for this score to come to contemporary notice.

That it was written by Mendelssohn at an early age means nothing, for the skill of this phenomenal composer manifest in his youth has had ample approval in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture (written at age seventeen). It would seem that this master wrote a lot of worthy music in his 'teens. This concerto is prevailingly light, gay, and charming; if it is not a great and heavy work, it is surely a pleasant diversion. The thematic material does not equal Mendelssohn's later inspirations, but the workmanship is astonishing for a product of a fourteen year old composer. The second movement is a beautiful songlike piece which has some lofty flights of lyricism clearly stamped with Mendelssohn's hallmark. You will thoroughly enjoy this work, if for nothing more than the novelty, and will probably welcome it to the list of violin concertos for the good music that it is.

Menuhin and Furtwängler get together for a performance of the familiar *Concerto in E minor* that is a delight in more respects than one. This is one performance that does not begin with the idea of establishing new speed records; the last movement is taken at a sane pace, brisk and bouncy but not pushed and hurried. There is just the right amount

of sentiment in the second movement. We would call this one of the most beautiful and satisfying performances on discs today. Both sides are very well recorded, and this disc is highly recommended. S.

Rubinstein: Concerto No. 4 in D minor, Op. 70.

Friedrich Wührer (piano) with the Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7780) \$5.95.

In the October 1952 issue we reviewed the first recording ever made of a Rubinstein concerto, and now we have another version of the same work. It is rather unfortunate that another Rubinstein concerto was not selected, so that we would have two different works on discs instead of two versions of the same one. Of the five piano concertos composed by this man, the *Fourth* is the best, and it served as a virtuoso vehicle not only for its composer but also for Paderewski, Hofmann, Carreno, Hambourg, Rosenthal, and others. It was played often "in its day" and was studied by conservatory students along with other great concertos. It is considered today as no masterpiece among concertos, but it is admittedly a glittering array of piano pyrotechnics. It is a delightfully overblown romantic work that moves along with great momentum, and never fails to impress an audience.

The previous recording of this work, referred to above, was by Oscar Levant with the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos (*CML-4599), and it found high favor in these columns and elsewhere. The present set by Friedrich Wührer, with Rudolf Moralt conducting an orchestra known for recording purposes on the Vox label as the Vienna State Philharmonia, is one that challenges Levant and Mitropoulos. Levant's performance is high voltage from the beginning to the end; he brings strength and a volatile quality to the music, pausing little to point out romantic coloring. It is a reading tightly laced with temperament, and his companion on the podium sees it that way too. Wührer traces a more relaxed and romantic picture, not in any sense a weak one, but a more compromising one. Technically, Wührer is a bit smoother, but his reading and the type of reproduction add to that observation. The piano tone in the Columbia disc is inclined, in the loud passages, to be clangy—the mike must have been on top of the piano. Vox has a traditional type of piano tone—the mike at a safe distance. If you are interested in this work, it will be worth your while to sample both efforts; both are different types of interpretation and reproduction, but both have merit. S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73

("Emperor"). Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5114) \$5.95.

Why Westminster does not have Badura-Skoda

record the Grieg, Schumann, and other such romantic concertos rather than the Beethoven concertos is something possibly only their repertoire chief could answer. But we can give a mighty good reason why he should first record those works and then in a few years approach the Beethoven. That reason is this very disc. The same talent, skill, and manner of approach would undoubtedly result in a fine recording of the Grieg concerto; but in the Emperor it results in a cameo-like performance that does not begin to do justice to the scope of this score. Compared to the recently released Horowitz-Reiner version (*V-LM-1718), this is child's play. We would not give the impression that Badura-Skoda is not technically equal to this work as far as finger dexterity is concerned—he is; however, in the matter of interpretative insight and sheer power required for this mighty concerto, he has not yet arrived at the point where his ability is worth recording. Scherchen gives a curiously uneven account of the orchestral score, not bad but not good, and not in the same league with Reiner.

The Horowitz-Reiner version mentioned is about the best to date, although several others are also excellent and may be preferred by many. Serkin and Ormandy do a handsome job with this work (*CML-4373) and Schnabel's recording has been reissued on the Treasury series (*V-LCT-1015). Another version in high favor is Clifford Curzon with Szell and the London Philharmonic (*L-LL-114), a very fine performance indeed. Others in the LP list are in the class of "also-ran." Badura-Skoda is too valuable an artist on any company's roster to be recorded in the wrong music. His recorded repertoire should be built up carefully and gradually, for his talent is worthy of a long-range program. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Casals Festival at Perpignan (Vol. III—Beethoven).

Eugene Istomin, Rudolf Serkin (pianos); Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violin-cello). 4-12" discs plus 1 bonus disc in album (*C-SL-169) \$22.59.

CONTENTS: *Trio No. 6 in E-flat, Op. 70, No. 2* (Istomin, Schneider, Casals); *Trio No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 11* (Istomin, Schneider, Casals); *Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2* (Serkin, Casals); (7) *Variations in E-flat on "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen"* (Serkin, Casals); (12) *Variations in F on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen," Op. 66* (Serkin, Casals); *Trio No. 2 in G, Op. 1, No. 2* (Istomin, Schneider, Casals); *Trio No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 97* ("Archduke") (Istomin, Schneider, Casals).

Columbia has selected four LP records from its Casal Perpignan Festival recordings containing Beethoven compositions for the present album. With this album there is included as a bonus a so-called "inscription" record. This is a 12-inch LP disc, one

side of which contains a recording of a rehearsal Casals conducted of a section of Bach's *Concerto in A minor* with Isaac Stern as soloist and the Perpignan Festival Orchestra. This is a most fascinating and amusing recording. One has the unique feeling that he is eavesdropping on the great master as he sings the melodies for his men and explains the music to them—fortunately for us he speaks to them in English so we get the full benefit of his often witty remarks. The reverse side is blank except for an inscription in English in Casals' handwriting. This is really a bonus record worth having.

Mozart: Sonata No. 17 in A, K. 526. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 1 in A, K. 305** and **Mozart: Sonata No. 7 in F, K. 376.** Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*CML-4617) \$5.45.

These two sterling artists, Alexander Schneider and Ralph Kirkpatrick, continue with their fine series of recordings of Mozart Sonatas for violin and harpsichord. Those who enjoyed their former efforts will surely wish to add the present disc to their libraries. This is music for the connoisseur—if you are not acquainted with it, by all means listen to this disc before you buy it.

Roussel: Quartet in D, Op. 45. Loewenguth Quartet. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4026) \$2.50.

The modern French composer, Albert Roussel's *Quartet in D, Op. 45* makes its first and so far only appearance on LP discs this month. It is not too modern for most tastes—its beautiful slow movement is something to really take to your heart. The Loewenguth Quartet does a fine piece of work, and Decca has supplied excellent reproduction.

OPERA

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov (complete). (Sung in Russian). Boris Christoff (basso) with supporting soloists, chorus and L'Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 13-7" discs in box (øV-WHMY-6400) \$16.04. 4-12" discs in album (*V-LHMY-6400) \$23.80.

The long awaited complete *Boris Godounov*, as recorded by HMV with Boris Christoff in the title role, has finally arrived; for once, a set of records lives up to and, in some instances, surpasses expectations. Certain facts must be disposed of before getting along with the general discussion. First, it is the Rimsky-Korsakov version that is used with the Death of Boris coming at the end of the opera and the Revolutionary Scene immediately preceding it. Also the episode between Marina and the Jesuit Rangoni is included. The few cuts that are made are indicated in the libretto. Second, Boris Christoff sings two other roles in addition to the name part,

that of the old monk Pimen and the rascally Varlaám. That this unusual feat is artistically successful is a great tribute to Christoff's consummate acting ability.

The cast is a good one with Christoff, of course, dominating the proceedings. As Boris he is regal and human by turns. His Varlaám is boisterous, villainous and very Russian. As the old monk he exhibits a third facet of his genius and becomes a dignified old man. His is truly a virtuoso performance, both vocally and histrionically. Others in the long cast successfully double parts. Eugenia Zarenska sings Feodor and Marina, while André Bielecki undertakes the parts of Shuisky and Missail with more than passing success; Lydia Romanova essays the roles of the Nurse and the Hostess of the inn. As the false Dimitri, Nicilai Gedda sings very well as does Wassili Pasternak in the part of the Fool. The chorus and orchestra under Issay Dobrowen's inspired direction sing and play in sterling fashion. It would be difficult to imagine a better performance. All the sweep, grandeur and tragedy Moussorgsky wrote into his masterful score are strikingly presented. This, along with the absolutely first-rate recording, a libretto prepared specially for the set, and an intelligent essay on the opera by Gerald Abraham, make this release a memorable one.

One other observation! At first glance one sensed the great disparity in price between the 45's and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ sets. A difference in price of virtually \$8.00 between the two speeds seemed, to this reviewer another indication of RCA Victor's irrational stubbornness as regards its 45 rpm discs insofar as classical music is concerned. A little thought, however, shows the 45's are hardly worth even the reduced price because they average a little less than seven minutes per side, thus breaking the opera into twenty-six sections as against only seven interruptions on LP, where the breaks, in all except one instance, come at the end of a scene or an act. Viewed in this light, even at the higher price the artistic advantages accruing to the LP pressings are well worth the difference.

NOTE: For those interested, playing time for each of the LP sides of the above are (1) 25:00, (2) 18:25, (3) 22:00, (4) 24:50, (5) 17:50, (6) 18:00, (7) 19:00, (8) 24:57. W.

Verdi: Aida (complete). (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi (soprano); Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano); Mario del Monaco (tenor); Aldo Protti (baritone); Dario Caselli, Fernando Corena (bassos); Chorus and Orchestra of St. Cecilia Academy (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-13) \$17.85.

This is the fourth *Aida* to be released and, by and large, it is the best. London has gone to considerable pains to gather together a strong cast, and the results are very apparent.

* indicates LP 88 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

For me, this set was a disappointment. Christoff is too dominating, and the interpretation is not authentic.



Renata Tebaldi makes a first-class *Aida*. She has the voice for the role and, in addition, is temperamentally suited to the part of the unhappy slave girl. In the great arias *Ritorna vincitor* and *O patria mia* she sings with a sure grasp of style and beautiful tone. Like her other recorded performances, this, too, is an outstanding one. Ebe Stignani is a dark-voiced, passionate Amneris. Vocally acceptable (although more mannered than Tebaldi) she is utterly convincing in the great duet *Vieni sul crin* and her singing in the last act is notable for the pathos and tragedy she conveys.

The male portion of the cast is also well above average. Mario del Monaco is a strong, young man who sings well. He lacks subtlety (at times he seems as subtle as an elephant) but then one is not so sure that Rhadames was not a rather bumptious fellow. It would help, however, if del Monaco would learn to sing softly when the occasion demands. His *Celeste Aida* is delivered in stentorian tones and there is not much change in manner for the *Nile Scene* and the final duet. The Amonasro of Aldo Protti is well conceived and presented. Ramfis and Il Re are sonorously sung by Dario Caselli and Fernando Corena.

The chorus and orchestra (Saint Cecilia, Rome) under the direction of Alberto Erede sing and play in sterling fashion. Erede is a top-flight operatic conductor who, like all good *maestri*, never hurries matters. One of the real high spots in this recording is the great scene *Gloria all' eggito* and much of its resounding success is due to the deliberate tempo he adopts.

London's recording is good, but their recent recordings have a very much over-emphasized bass response that is, at times, almost unmanageable. An Italian-English libretto is furnished. W.

Puccini: La Tosca (complete). (Sung in Italian).

Renata Tebaldi (soprano); Giuseppe Campora, Piero di Palma (tenors); Enzo Mascherini, Fernando Corena (baritones); Dario Caselli, Antonio Sacchetti (bassos); Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di St. Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-660/1) \$11.90.

Puccini's well contrived operatic thriller receives its fifth recording, this time by the forces of the St. Cecilia Academy (Rome). Certainly the work is a popular one and from its *premiere* in 1900 has been established as one of the staples of the repertoire.

London has lined up a fair cast to support Renata Tebaldi who is the indubitable star of the performance. In fact her performance of Puccini's *donna gelosa* is perhaps the best on records. She runs the emotional gamut in expressive fashion and really makes the character come alive. Vocally, of course, she is one of Italy's better dramatic sopranos—her range is considerable and remarkably

even throughout its register. The prayer, *Vissi d'arte* is very successful, and the contempt and loathing she gets in her voice in her dealings with Scarpia is amazing. Giuseppe Campora, the Cavaradossi of the recording is an average Italian tenor. His voice is good but he lacks the subtlety and musicianship that would raise his performance to the level it should reach to be effective. The same strictures apply, although to a somewhat lesser degree, to the Baron Scarpia of Enzo Mascherini. His performance is more convincing dramatically than Campora's, despite the fact that he is less gifted vocally. Fernando Corena's Sagristano avoids the over-acting that so often makes the figure ridiculous. The Angelotti (Caselli) and Spoletta (de Palma) are also above average.

Alberto Erede turns in his usual fine, well considered conductorial job. His undeniable talents in the operatic field are obvious, and one gets the impression that he both loves his work and takes pains—something all too few musicians seem willing to do these days.

Comparison with other *Toscas* places this one just after the RCA Victor set with Gigli and Caniglia and before the Cetra and Westminster recordings. Good recording prevails in the present set and an Italian-English libretto is furnished. W.

Mozart: Il Re Pastore, K. 208 (complete). (Sung in Italian). Käthe Nentwig, Agnes Giebel (sopranos); Werner Hohmann, Albert Weikenmeier (tenors); Hetty Plümacher (contralto); with the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Gustav Lund. 2-12" discs in album (*PE-SPL-553) \$12.55.

It was in 1775 that the nineteen year old Mozart composed this *componimento drammatico* for the festivities attending the visit of the Archduke Maximilian Franz. *Il Re Pastore* is a setting of one of Metastasio's banal and stilted libretti. It is the story of two pairs of lovers who, under the patronage of Alexander the Great, represent, as Einstein points out in his great study of Mozart, "the theme of love *versus* reasons of state. (They) produce veritable torrents of noble sentiments, and words of wisdom about the duties of a ruler drip unceasingly, sweet as syrup." The music, fortunately, has hardly any connection with the action. Mozart wrote beautiful music, of course, but he was writing instrumentally—the arias are concerti for three sopranos and two tenors. The score is warm and full-blooded; there is a terseness, a compactness not heretofore in evidence in Mozart's writings.

The singers in this recording (like those in so many recordings made in Europe these days) are neither very good nor very bad. Agnes Giebel as Amintas and Käthe Nentwig as Elissa sing creditably, and Hetty Plümacher (listed as a contralto but really a mezzo-soprano) also turns in an acceptable performance. The men, Herren Weikenmeier and Hohmann, have a rough time of it, plagued as they are

by various and sundry florid passages that try them sorely.

The Tonstudio Orchestra plays accurately and with surprising spirit while conductor Lund keeps things moving briskly. It might be noted in passing, however, that the tasteless *cadenza*, introduced in the 19th century at the end of the aria *L'amero sarà costante*, is used and it sticks out like a sore thumb.

The recording is deftly accomplished, and notes along with an Italian-English libretto are included. W.

Do not agree with this review
Sat in
A-1
Massenet: Thaïs (complete). (Sung in French). Geori Boué, Jean Giraudau, Roger Bourdin, Michel Roux with Chorus and Orchestra of the Paris Opera conducted by George Sebastian. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-227) \$18.50.

The French repertory is rather poorly represented on discs; two *Fausts*, three *Carmens*, a *Manon*, and a *Lakmé* along with the rarely performed *Les Troyens à Carthage* and *Les Pêcheurs des Perles* constitute the main body of the catalogue. Now, with the release of *Thaïs*, the total rises to seven works, a step in the right direction; and, perhaps, more will follow.

Thaïs has not been heard at the Metropolitan since before World War II, and thus it has some of the qualities of a novelty. The story, a luscious combination of early Christian asceticism and near eastern voluptuousness, is good theatre. The roles of the courtesan *Thaïs* and the cenobite monk *Athanaël* are "juicy" ones, the former being a favorite with such singing actresses as Mary Garden, Geraldine Farrar and Maria Jeritza, while the latter has been a vehicle for the talents of such incomparable singers as Renaud, Amato and Journet. The opera *Thaïs*, in fact, depends for a great deal of its effect on just such high type singers and, unfortunately, if there are singers of such calibre in France today, they are kept well hidden.

Mme. Geori Boué, the *Thaïs* of the present recording, is only a typical French lyric soprano with a reedy voice produced by a characteristically French method that lends a nasal quality to an already thin organ. It is not the sensuous, caressing voice the part demands. M. Roger Bourdin has been singing in and out of France and also in and out of various recording studios for upwards of twenty years. It is an astonishingly lack-lustre performance that he turns in. One would expect, with his background of experience, a vital and dramatic performance in this powerful role—but no, his *Honte! horreur, ténèbres éternelles* and *Voilà donc la terrible cité* are delivered quite calmly, almost deliberately. In the relatively minor role of *Nicias*, Jean Giraudau is adequate, as are Mmes. Momart and Leroy in theirs.

Georges Sebastian and the chorus and orchestra of the Théâtre National roll along through the opera

in a way that neither adds nor detracts much from Massenet's scented score—in short, it is routine. Recording is fair, not up to *Urania's* recent standards, notably *Lohengrin* and *Don Pasquale*. Notes, pictures and a libretto are included. W.

Offenbach: Les Contes d'Hoffmann (abridged). (Sung in German). Erna Berger (soprano), Anneliese Müller (contralto), Peter Anders (tenor), Jaro Prohaska (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-224) \$11.90.

Another *Contes d'Hoffmann* makes its appearance this month—it is the third recording and it is also the third different language in which it has been recorded. Columbia issued the original French performance, London an excellent English translation and now we have a German version. Offenbach's only serious opera has always been a prime favorite in this corner. It has a great wealth of melody, real drama, comedy, and through it all runs a fascinating vein of the fantastic—it is wonderful entertainment and consequently good theatre. Even in the German translation the piece loses very little—much less than most other operas do under similar circumstances.

There are two outstanding artists in this recording: Erna Berger, who sings *Antonia*, and Peter Anders, the *Hoffmann*. Both singers are genuine musicians, seasoned and accomplished. Their performances are models of interpretive excellence. Jaro Prohaska undertakes the three roles of *Coppelius*, *Dappertutto* and *Dr. Miracle* with moderate success. Vocally, he is a baritone of modest gifts that are used in reasonably able fashion. The *Giulietta* of *Ilsa Langhammer-Klein* and the *Olympia* of *Rita Streich* are average conceptions.

Arthur Rother, a better than average musician, directs the Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin in a performance that moves along in a sprightly manner. The "abridgment" of the score has been made with an eye to coherence and all the principal arias and ensemble numbers are included.

The recording technically, however, is only fair (almost poor) and despite the excellence of Erna Berger and Peter Anders the performances on Columbia and London records are definitely superior. A complete German-English libretto is supplied. W.

Verdi: La Forza del Destino (complete). (Sung in Italian). Adriana Guerrini, Miriam Pirazzini, Giuseppe Campora, Anselmo Colzani, Fernando Corena with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala conducted by Armando La Rosa Parodi. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-226) \$18.50.

Verdi's "Russian" opera, so-called because it was commissioned by the Imperial Opera at St. Petersburg, had its *première* in that city some ninety years

ago on 11 November 1862. Its success was only moderate, for there were those who resented a foreigner's composing for the occasion. Subsequent revisions strengthened the score, and now it is a favorite in opera houses all over the world.

The cast, as supplied by La Scala for this recording is only fair. Adriana Guerrini, as Leonora, sounds mis-cast. Her voice does not have the bigness and opulence required for the part. In the more hectic moments (and there are many of them) she sounds a little frantic, but when the music calms down, as in *La Vergine degli angeli*, she does very well indeed. Don Alvaro is sung by Giuseppe Campora, and he too is sometimes overwhelmed by the passion and drive of the music; when this happens he strains for his notes in a manner that made one listener a bit uneasy. His singing of the difficult *La vita e l'inferno all' infelice* demonstrates both his strength and weakness. Anselmo Colzani, a robust baritone, offers a bit of a problem. His voice has a "furry" quality that suggests that perhaps he does not record well, for the recording in general is pretty good. Others in the cast are quite good; Miriam Pirazzini is a flighty Preziosilla, Fernando Corena a first-rate and somewhat sinister Melitone; and a newcomer, Giuseppe Modesti, is Padre Guardiano and in the expressive and moving finale to Act 2 *Il santo nome di Dio* his rich bass is most impressive.

Maestro La Rosa Parodi directs a good performance; his pacing and choice of tempi are such as to underscore the drama without permitting it to become a musical rat race. The chorus, which plays an important part in the proceedings, is notable for its excellent tone and precision.

Urania has recorded the opera well, although there are some curious volume changes (clumsy monitoring?) and the previously mentioned unhappy vocal sound emitted by baritone Colzani (faulty microphone placement?). The choice between this set and the previously issued Cetra lies with the prospective buyer. This department would give the nod to Cetra because of its stronger cast and better interpretive qualities.

Beethoven: Fidelio, Op. 72 (complete). (Sung in German). Torsten Ralf (tenor); Hilde Konetzni (soprano); Paul Schoeffler (basso); Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7793) \$18.80.

The second "complete" recording of Beethoven's only opera *Fidelio* is issued this month by Vox. The first recording released several years ago by Oceanic, was favorably received and there is not too much on these records to make owners of the earlier set look with disfavor on their purchase.

The cast here is, ostensibly, a good one. Hilde Konetzni, an able dramatic soprano, is an adequate Leonore who vocally satisfactorily negotiates all the intricacies of the score with ease. She does a first-

rate job with the scena *Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin?* and is convincing in the concerted numbers. Paul Schoeffler is a vocally secure Don Pizzaro and delivers the resounding *Ha, welche ein Augenblick* in a truly vindictive manner. The weakest member of the cast is, surprisingly enough, Torsten Ralf, the Florestan. His performance disappoints, for he has one of the big moments in the opera, the wonderful recitative *Gott! welch' Dunkel hier* followed by the exciting aria *In des Lebens Frühlingstagen*. His performance of this music leaves much to be desired, particularly as to expression and feeling.

The minor roles are capably sung by Irmgard Seefried (Marcelline), Peter Klein (Jacquino) and Herbert Alsen (Rocco). The Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra play and sing well but are in no way exceptional and this reviewer, to put it bluntly, feels that such performances are not good enough for records.

Vox's recording runs the gamut of quite good to definitely mediocre. Further, the practice of playing the *Leonore Overture No. 3* before the final scene of the opera (or between the two acts as is sometimes done) has always seemed grotesque and in poor taste. A libretto but no notes are supplied. W.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale (complete). (Sung in Italian). Dora La Gatta (soprano); Agostino Lazari (tenor); Afro Poli (baritone); Fernando Corena (basso); Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala Opera conducted by Armando la Rosa Parodi. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-228) \$11.90.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale (complete). (Sung in Italian). Lina Aymaro (soprano); Juan Oncina (tenor); Scipio Colombo (baritone); Melchior Luise (basso); Vienna Kammerchor and Vienna State Opera conducted by Argeo Quadri. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-206) \$12.50.

Operas are being issued these days in a manner that reminds one of the animals entering the Ark. For a good many years one had to be satisfied with the early Victor recording (and a good one, too) of *Don Pasquale*. For an even greater number of years those who did not own the Victor set had to do without any *Don Pasquale* for it was discontinued prior to the war. Now there are two very commendable performances, one from Vienna and the other from Milan.

Perhaps the best way to discuss the two issues is to place them side by side, as it were. In the title role, Westminster has Melchior Luise, a basso buffa whose chief assets are a good voice and an understanding of what is required of him. Urania offers the superb Fernando Corena, who has all that Luise has plus a sense of humor and a more farcical approach. Norina is sung by Lina Aymaro in the Viennese recording. She reveals a voice of mediocre quality, flexible and accurate. Her performance is note perfect but shows little imagination. Dora la

Gatta, her counterpart in the Italian recording is on about the same level but with a little more vocal agility, particularly in the matter of trills. Ernesto is sung by Juan Oncina in the Westminster, Agostino Lazzeri in the Urania. Oncina is a very light lyric tenor who sings with style and intelligence; but his vocal equipment is limited, and his upper notes are strained and forced at times. Lazzeri has considerably more voice, is equally elegant as to style and polish. He has one bad habit, that of gulping and sobbing to portray emotion; although it does not obtrude unduly, one wishes it could be eliminated altogether. The two Doctors Malatesta, Colombo and Poli are equally good, with the former having more voice, the latter a better style.

The main difference, the weight that tips the balance in favor of Urania for this reviewer, is at the conductor's desk. Quadri's direction is lacking in sparkle and imagination (as was his *Tosca*). His beat is four-square, he hews to the line but is unable to release any of the zest and sheer animal spirit that lie in the score. Parodi, on the other hand, seems to enjoy himself immensely, as do the members of his cast, with the result that the listener does too.

Urania features some of the finest recording on discs and Westminster submits its usual fine job. Not much to choose from here. Libretti and notes are supplied by both companies. W.

Verdi and Puccini Arias. Mario del Monaco (tenor) with the Orchestra of The Accademia di St. Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-670) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Luisa Miller*—Quando le sere al placido; *Traviata*—De' miei bollenti spiriti; *Macbeth*—Ah! La paterna mano; *Tosca*—Recondita armonia & E lucevan le stelle; *Fanciulla del West*—Ch'ella mi creda; *Manon Lescaut*—No! pazzo son!; *Turandot*—No piangere, liu.

Verdi: Aida—Ritorna vincitor (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Chanson du roi de Thule (Act II). And **Gounod: Faust**—Air des bijoux (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi (soprano) with L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9017) \$2.95.

On these two operatic discs, most interest attaches to that of Mario del Monaco, the young Italian tenor now singing at the Metropolitan and who made a recent appearance on the popular "Toast of the Town" television show. This reviewer recalls several Italian HMV discs of a few years back by del Monaco that showed considerable promise, particularly one from *Andrea Chenier*. The present disc, then, comes as a sort of shock for rather than showing improvement, this young artist has slipped—not vocally, of course, for he is young and his strong, heroic tenor is well produced and of great size. In fact this asset, this strength, is his greatest weak-

ness—that is his complete inability to sing softer than a mezzo-forte. Eight operatic arias all coming at one mf to fff can be a bit wearing. This, coupled with or more likely because of, his lack of understanding of the music he sings, makes for monotonous listening. It is unfortunate, for two of the Verdi arias, the *Luisa Miller* and *Macbeth* are rarely sung and rank with the Italian master's finest inspirations. When properly handled, this music is nothing short of superb, but here . . . Curiously, the most successful is the familiar *Dei miei bollenti spiriti*. London's ffff is very much in evidence but recording techniques that favor the soloist at the expense of the orchestra are old fashioned to say the least.

In its lower priced series, London issues a Tebaldi disc. Of her *Ritorna vincitor* one can only say Bravo! It is a fine job. Not so good, however, is her *Marguerite* (sung in Italian) which is note perfect, of course, but shows little understanding in its projection. And why, on an LP disc, where there is plenty of room, cut the second verse of the *Roi de Thulé*? One is surprised at Erede's going along with this sort of niggardliness. Good recording but with the voice favored here, too. W.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 11 ("Lobet Gott in seinem Reichen"). (Sung in German). Claire Fassbender-Luz (soprano); Ruth Michaelis (contralto); Werner Hohmann (tenor); Bruno Müller (bass); Swabian Choral Society and the Stuttgart Bach Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-34) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 63 ("Christen, ätzet diesen Tag!"). (Sung in German). Margit Opawsky (soprano); Hilde Ross-Majdan (contralto); Waldeemar Kmentz (tenor); Harald Hermann (bass); Vienna Chamber Choir and Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Michael Gielen, with Helmut Wobitsch (trumpet). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-518) \$5.95.

Two more Bach *Cantatas*, one of them previously unrecorded, enliven this month's lists. Lyrichord enters the field with the *Cantata No. 11* ("Lobet Gott in seinem Reichen"), a work recorded previously by London with Kathleen Ferrier and others. This *Cantata*, also described as an oratorio (Bach himself called it the *Oratorium auf Himmelfahrt*) was written between 1734-36 and is a prime example of Bach at his best. The soloists are more than adequate for the job and the work of Messrs. Burun, Milde and Ludeke (trumpet, oboe and organ respectively) is uniformly excellent. Lyrichord has supplied first class recording and the disc can be recommended without reserve. The other recording (London) of this work was not available for comparison.

The Bach Guild's selection of the *Cantata No. 63*

was unhackneyed to say the least, for this is the first recording of the piece. Musically, it too partakes of the "oratorio" style. There are no chorales and the music is in the concerto style. When one realizes that in 17th century Germany an oratorio was called a sacred concerto, the name oratorio, as applied to this work, takes on a different meaning from that usually associated with it. The tenor and alto soloists are quite good but the bass sounds tentative while the soprano is downright unhappy at times. Either the music lies too high or her method is at fault (one suspects the latter). In all events she gasps and struggles through her part in the duet *Gott, du hast es wohl gefüget* which probably accounts for Herr Hermann's rather leary approach to his part. Brilliant trumpet work by Helmut Wobitsch is an added feature, and the recording is all that could be desired.

W.

St. Olaf Choir. (Vol. I). St. Olaf Choir directed by Olaf C. Christensen. 1-12" disc (*ST. OLAF DLP-3) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *The Spirit Also Helpeth Us* (Bach); *50th Psalm* (Christiansen); *Hodie Christus natus est* (Palestrina); *Salvation Is Created* (Tschernokoff); *Cantata of Peace* (Milhaud); *The Advent Motet* (Schreck); *Alleluia, Christ Is Born* (Luvaas); *Jot er saa glad* (Trad.); *God's Son Has Made Me Free* (Grige—arr. Overby).

St. Olaf Choir. (Vols. II, III, and IV). St. Olaf Choir directed by Olaf C. Christensen. 3-10" discs (*ST. OLAF DLP-4/6) \$3.85 each.

VOLUME II: *Beautiful Savior* (St. Olaf Choir Theme); *Hosanna*; *How Fair the Church of Christ Shall Stand*; *Wake, Awake*; *50th Psalm*.

VOLUME III: *O magnum Mysterium* (Victoria); *23rd Psalm* (Schumann); *Brazilian Psalm* (Berger); *The Christmas Symbol* (Christiansen); *Lullaby on Christmas Eve* (Christiansen); *Lost in the Night* (Finnish Folk Song—arr. Christiansen).

VOLUME IV: *Praise to the Lord*; *Vision of Peace* (Berger); *Our Father* (Gretchaninoff); *Die mit Tränen saen* (Schein); *Built on the Rock*; *All My Heart This Night Rejoices* (Ebeling); *O How Beautiful the Sky* (Danish Carol).

St. Olaf Choir, one of the most famous college choirs in the country, was founded nearly fifty years ago by F. Melius Christiansen and is now under the direction of the founder's son, Olaf. When the elder Christiansen came to St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, shortly after the turn of the century, he conceived the idea that a college choir should be more than a "glee club" just singing a few college songs and popular ditties. To have such a group of young college students turn their attention to Bach was something unheard of in those days, but Christiansen had faith and untold energy, and developed a choir that gained international renown.

The four LP discs listed above give very good samples of the extensive repertoire of this famous musical organization. They are a very welcome addition to the catalog of choral recordings.

Palestrina Selections. (Sung in Latin). Choir of the Sistine Chapel conducted by Msgr. Dominic Barolucci. 1-12" disc (REN-X-55) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Exaltabo Te*; *Super flumina*; *Bonum est*; *Dies sanctificatus*; *Pueri hebraeorum*; *Popule meus*; *Tota pulchra*; *Hodie Christus*; *Tribulationes*; *Exsultate Deo*; *Vox dilecti mei*; *Laudate Dominum*.

Monteverdi: Magnificat. One side, and **Monteverdi: Vespri della Beata Vergine**—*Domine ad adiuvandum*; *Nigra sum*; *Ave Maris stella*. (Sung in Latin). Soloists and instrumental ensemble conducted by Angelo Ephrikian. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-558) \$5.95.

Vivaldi: Laudate pueri (I). One side, and **Vivaldi: Laudate pueri** (II). (Sung in Latin). Choral Ensemble and chamber orchestra of the Scuola Veneziana conducted by Angelo Ephrikian, with Rosano Giancolo (soprano). 1-12" disc (*REN-X-50) \$5.95.

These three discs, devoted to the music of the early baroque period, are a veritable windfall for lover's of this era. Vivaldi, Palestrina and Monteverdi are names to conjure with, and here are generous samplings of two of the masters and two hitherto unrecorded settings of the 113th Psalm by Vivaldi.

The Palestrina disc includes no less than twelve items, including the *Tota pulchra es* and *Vox dilecti mei* from his wonderful setting of the *Song of Songs*. The singing of the Choir of the Sistine Chapel is notable for its purity of tone and, of course, the style is completely authentic.

The Monteverdi disc is of surpassing interest and beauty. The glorious *Magnificat* is excellently sung by eight voices (double quartet) accompanied by strings, trombone and two trumpets. Musically the work is of first rank—a glimpse into a vanished world. The other side contains a *Domine ad adiuvandum* for two sopranos, alto and bass; *Nigra sum*, for soprano solo; and a hymn, *Ave Maris stella*. All of this music bears a secular stamp, that is to say the words treated expressively as in the manner of the madrigal and opera, that lends added interest and piquancy. The soloists are uniformly excellent and Angelo Ephrikian directs with good taste and perfect sense of style.

Vivaldi is represented by massive settings of the 113th Psalm. Both works are vigorous, abounding in flowing melodies and sometimes surprisingly modern chromaticisms. The soloist, Rosanna Giancolo, sings well and the orchestra and chorus under Angelo Ephrikian second her efforts successfully.

All three discs are well recorded and can be highly recommended.

W.

VOCAL



Tropical Love Songs. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2212) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Flamingo*; *Orchids in the Moonlight*; *Sleepy Lagoon*; *Temptation*; *Poinciana*; *Jealousy*; *The Breeze and I*; *Brazil*.

This is as about as monotonous a record as we have heard in many a long day. Miss Kirsten makes all of these songs sound alike; and one follows the other without a break until the end of the record side. When we came to that point we had no urge to turn the record over; but duty called us, and we listened to four more songs that sounded just like the first four. Russ Case supplies a rhythmic accompaniment that reminded us of the everlasting jungle drums in *Emperor Jones*, and when we had finished listening, we felt very much as that ill-fated Pullman porter must have felt at the end of that famous play. If anyone had been around the studio with a silver bullet, we might have asked him to put us out of our misery.

Mahler: (8) Songs. Desi Halban (soprano) accompanied by Bruno Walter (piano). One side, and **Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-171) \$12.11.

NOTE: For review of this album see under ORCHESTRA.

ORGAN



Albert Schweitzer Recital. Albert Schweitzer playing the organ of the Parish Church, Gunsbach (Alsace). 3-12" disc (*C-ML-4600/2) \$5.45 each. Or 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-175) \$17.35.

CONTENTS: *C-ML-4600: *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C (Bach)*; *Fugue in A minor (Bach)*; *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor ("The Great") (Bach)*. *C-ML-4601: *Bach: (7) Chorale-Preludes—O Mensch, bewein dein' Sünde gross (1st & 2nd versions)*; *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*; *Ich ruf' zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*; *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*; *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*; *Nun komm', der Heiden Heiland*. *C-ML-4602: *Prelude in C (Bach)*; *Prelude in D (Bach)*; *Canzona in D minor (Bach)*; *Sonata No. 6 in D minor, Op. 65 (Mendelssohn)*.

The organ playing of Albert Schweitzer is something like a voice from the past, from another and calmer era, something providing quite a contrast with today's tempo of living. We do not know how Bach played his music, having no recordings to prove his interpretations. We do not know how he would play his music today, with modern high-

speed action organs with a steady, unlimited supply of wind. And we do not know how he would adapt his tempi to the appallingly dead acoustics of most churches today. But there is one thing Albert Schweitzer (and others before him, such as Louis Vierne) can prove to us, and that is that Bach need not be played at a fast tempo. There is much brilliant writing in Bach that lends itself to virtuosos speed of execution, with thrilling effect. Another way of playing Bach is to endeavor to clarify the melodic lines and give the inner voices a chance to sing. This Schweitzer achieves with wonderful effect, and beyond that, some of the works, notably the chorale-preludes, have a tranquillity and calm depth that transport you to another plane of thought from the cares of the day's worries.

Our pleasure in hearing Schweitzer's performances is not to be construed as an unqualified endorsement of his interpretations, to the exclusion of other organists' performances. By that criterion, Biggs would be out of the picture. There is plenty of room for both methods of playing Bach, as long as both are within the framework of good taste. But there is a definite experience in hearing Schweitzer that is virtually unique today, and it is an experience that is wholly valid, legitimate and worth while. The four large pages of program notes written by Schweitzer for this album are wonderful reading, and they are full of themes for illustration. His writing has the clarity and logic of his playing. The Mendelssohn *Sonata No. 6* Schweitzer declares is the finest of this master's organ works, and it is played with exquisite understanding.

Organists may find the registration a bit lacking in variety, or this or that not to their entire liking, but they will find ever so much to admire in this album—plenty of food for real thought here. Anyone interested in great organ music should avail himself of the opportunity to hear this great humanitarian and authority perform this music. The reproduction is superb on every disc. S.

The Pipe Organ. (Vols. I and II). Michael Cheshire, playing the Wurlitzer organ of the Richmond (Va.) Mosque. 2-10" discs (*SOT-1050/1) \$4. each.

VOLUME I: Second Hungarian Rhapsody (Liszt); Giselle—Grand Waltz (Adam); Improvisation on a Theme from "Bells of St. Mary;" London-derry Air (Trad.—arr. Foort); In a Persian Market (Ketelbey); Coppelia—Waltz (Delibes); Zampa Overture (Herold). (*SOT-1050)

VOLUME II: Orpheus—Overture (Offenbach); Nocturne (Grieg); Scotch Medley (Trad.); Tale of the Czar Saltan—Flight of the Bumble Bee (Rimsky-Korsakov); Sleeping Beauty—Waltz (Tchaikovsky); March of the Tin Soldier (Jessel); Jalousie (Gade). (*SOT-1051)

These two LP discs were recorded by Cook

Laboratories (Stamford, Conn.) for those who are interested in high-fidelity reproduction—in fact they do not sound like much on an ordinary phonograph of limited range. The organ that was chosen for these recordings is the famous Wurlitzer instrument in the Mosque in Richmond, Va., one of the largest and most elaborate “movie” organs in existence. Mr. Cheshire seemingly tries most of the combinations of stops and the various effects in these recordings; his volume ranges from a whisper to full crescendo. When he gives it the works, hold on to your hats!

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Clavier—Book II, Preludes and Fugues Nos. 9-16. Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 4-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-1708) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1708) \$5.72.

Mme. Landowska continues with her project to record Bach's famous *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. Her earlier recordings in this famous series have received the highest praise from the critics, and so it is only necessary to state that the present disc is well up to the standard that this outstanding artist has set for herself.

PIANO



Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. Four sides, and **Chopin: (10) Mazurkas.** William Kapell (piano). 4-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-1715) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1715) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Mazurkas*—No. 14 in G minor, Op. 24, No. 1; No. 24 in C, Op. 33, No. 3; No. 35 in C minor, Op. 56, No. 3; In B-flat, Op. Posth.; No. 45 in A minor, Op. 67, No. 4; No. 9 in C, Op. 7, No. 5; No. 49 in F minor, Op. 68, No. 4; No. 48 in F, Op. 68, No. 3; No. 25 in B minor, Op. 33, No. 4; No. 44 in C, Op. 67, No. 3.

Rubinstein Plays Debussy. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 2-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-9008) \$2.83. One side, and **Chopin: Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-9008) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Debussy—*La Cathédrale Engloutie*; *Poissons d'or*; *La Fille aux cheveux de lin*; *Masques*; *La Terrasse des audiences au clair de lune*; *Ondine*.

Piano Music of Chopin. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 4-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-1707) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1707) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Ballade No. 3 in A-flat*; *Ballade No. 4 in F minor*; *Nocturne No. 15 in F minor*; *Nocturne No. 19 in E minor*; *Etude No. 2 in E*; *Etude No. 4 in C-sharp minor*; *Impromptu No. 1 in A-flat*; *Scherzo No. 1 in B minor*.

RCA Victor offers this month recordings by three

of the world's most famous keyboard artists. Students and lovers of the piano have a grand feast in store for them. All three of these fine pianists have been supplied with the best of reproduction, and thus these discs have our hearty recommendation.

Chopin: Sonata No. 1 in C minor, Op. 4. One side, and **Chopin: Variations on "La ci darem la mano," Op. 2** and **Chopin: Variations on a German Theme, Op. Posth.** Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1150) \$5.95.

Chopin: (14) Etudes. Leah Effenbach (piano). 1-12" disc (*ORFEO LP-11) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Etudes*, Op. 10, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12; *Etudes*, Op. 25, Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 11.

Chopin: (4) Impromptus. One side, and **Chopin: Bolero, Op. 19** and **Chopin: Berceuse, Op. 57** and **Chopin: Barcarolle, Op. 60** and **Chopin: Tarantelle, Op. 43.** Erno Balogh (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-20) \$5.95.

Chopin: (14) Valses. Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8172) \$4.98.

We wish that space were available to cover each of these splendid records in detail but that is impossible—it would require several pages. However, lovers of Chopin should not pass these fine discs by without a hearing. Upon investigation one will find that much of this music is not otherwise available on LP discs and that all of it is capably played and faithfully reproduced.

DICTION



Shakespeare: Hamlet (abridged). John Gielgud, Dorothy McGuire, Pamela Brown and supporting cast of the Theatre Guild on The Air. 8-7" discs in box (♠V-WDM-6007) \$9.75. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6007) \$11.44.

The present recording was taken from an NBC broadcast that took place about a year ago. It received much favorable comment, and thus a recording of it should find a reasonably large market. We would say that it is a good introduction to Shakespeare's great tragedy. It should be of interest to those who are not familiar with this great work and should whet their appetites for a full performance of the play or for the reading and study of the complete text. John Merivale, who plays the part of Horatio, serves as a narrator and ties the various scenes together with appropriate descriptive comments. A fine booklet, with a foreword by Mark van Doren, containing the complete text, in which the part that is given in this abridged version appears in italics, accompanies the records. Thus one may easily follow the play as recorded; this is hardly necessary, however, for the players speak their lines

so clearly that each word can be easily understood.

We highly recommend the present recording to high school students who are just becoming acquainted with the great bard. We are sure that they will gain greatly from listening to the abridged text as spoken by such a fine cast of players as the present one headed by the superb John Gielgud.

"Paris '90." Cornelia Otis Skinner with orchestra and chorus conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4619) \$5.45.

One of the cleverest and most successful theatrical ventures of last season was Miss Skinner's series of sketches billed as "Paris '90." The sketches were Miss Skinner's brain child—she wrote the dialogue and played all of the parts—her's was indeed a thrilling performance as all who saw her will testify. Such a production is ideal material for a recording, and we are delighted to announce that Columbia realized this and has made it available on an LP disc. Whether you saw this fine artist in this unusual work or not, we are sure you will enjoy this recording if you are at all interested in the theatre.

These sophisticated sketches are not for children to be sure, but we can assure you that they are always in good taste and are suitable for any adult audience with reasonably liberal views.

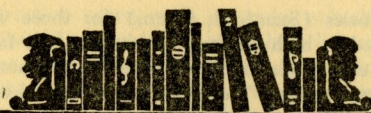
MISCELLANEOUS



The Great Barrelhouse Piano. Played on a nickelodeon. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1035) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Wedding of the Painted Doll; Singing a Song to the Stars; Judy; Button Up Your Overcoat; Broadway Melody; Highway to Heaven; Three Little Words; My Heart Belongs to the Girl Who Belongs to Somebody Else; Sing Something Simple; Sweet Jennie Lee.*

Hi-fi fans are going for this unique disc in a big way. Put it on a real hi-fi phonograph and turn up the volume control and then be sure to hang on to your chairs. For those who are too young or too unsophisticated to know, we should state that a nickelodeon is a coin operated automatic piano which usually included a full-scale xylophone and an attachment that made it sound like a battery of mandolins when it was cut in automatically from time to time. These instruments were particularly popular in the old-fashioned cheap saloons and brothels of all types. In these latter establishments the coin slot was adapted to the alleged elegance of the house—from a nickel to a half-dollar. However, no matter what you paid you got the same raucous "music."



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hadsa Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm.
 ⚬ indicates 45 rpm.